

Evolving Role of Local Government in Promoting Sustainable Tourism Development on the West Coast

Angela M. Cameron

**Research Assistant, Environmental Management and Design Division,
Lincoln University
angie.cameron@mail.com**

Ali Memon

**Professor of Planning, Environmental Management and
Design Division, Lincoln University
memonal@lincoln.ac.nz**

David G Simmons

**Professor of Tourism, Human Sciences Division,
Lincoln University
dsimmons@lincoln.ac.nz**

John R. Fairweather

**Principal Research Officer in the Agribusiness and Economics
Research Unit, Lincoln University
Fairweat@lincoln.ac.nz**

July 2001

ISSN 1175-5385

**Tourism Recreation Research and Education Centre
(TRREC)
Report No. 28**

Lincoln University

Contents

CONTENTS.....	i
LIST OF TABLES	iii
LIST OF PLATES	v
LIST OF FIGURES	vii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	ix
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.1.1 Sustainable Tourism Development	1
1.1.2 Functions of Local Government	2
1.2 The West Coast Case Study Area	3
1.2.1 Socio-economic Description	3
1.2.2 The West Coast Tourism Industry	4
1.2.3 Local Government.....	5
1.3 Objectives of this Study	7
1.4 Research Methods	8
1.5 Report Structure	9
CHAPTER 2 ENABLING ROLE OF DISTRICT COUNCILS IN TOURISM DEVELOPMENT	11
2.1 Introduction: ‘Enablement’ of Tourism	11
2.1.1 Benefits of Tourism.....	11
2.1.2 Enabling Tourism.....	11
2.2 The West Coast Situation.....	12
2.3 Economic Development Initiatives and Strategies	13
2.3.1 District Economic Development Strategies	13
2.4 The Annual Planning Process	15
2.5 Provision of Amenities and Attractions	15
2.5.1 The Current Situation.....	15
2.6 Event Tourism.....	17
2.7 ‘Enablement’: Discussion	17
CHAPTER 3 DISTRICT COUNCIL MANAGEMENT OF TOURISM’S IMPACTS.....	19
3.1 Introduction	19
3.2 Management of Tourism’s Social and Environmental Impacts	19
3.2.1 What is the rationale for management?.....	19
3.3 The Current Situation.....	20
3.4 Perceptions of the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA)	23
3.4.1 The Resource Consent Process	23
3.5 Regulation of the effects of development: Conclusion	29
3.6 Compliance with Development Regulation	30
3.7 The Provision of Utilities for Tourism.....	30

3.7.1	The Wider Context.....	30
3.7.2	The West Coast Situation.....	30
3.8	Utilities for tourism on the West Coast: Specific Concerns	32
3.8.1	Inadequate facilities for solid waste disposal.....	32
3.8.2	Inadequate facilities for sewage disposal.....	33
3.8.3	Lack of signage	33
3.8.4	The lack of planning for tourism utilities.....	34
3.9	Provision of Utilities for Tourism: Conclusion.....	35
3.10	Enabling Tourism vs Managing Tourism’s Impacts.....	36
CHAPTER 4	ROLE OF THE REGIONAL ORGANISATIONS	39
4.1	Introduction.....	39
4.2	Regional Council Functions and Responsibilities for Tourism Management.....	39
4.3	The Current Situation.....	40
4.4	Tourism West Coast.....	43
4.4.1	Functions and Responsibilities for Tourism Management	43
4.4.2	The Current Situation.....	43
CHAPTER 5	LOCAL GOVERNMENT MONITORING OF TOURISM.....	47
5.1	Introduction.....	47
5.2	The Current Situation in New Zealand	48
5.2.1	The Current Situation on the West Coast.....	49
CHAPTER 6	DISCUSSION.....	51
6.1	Introduction.....	51
6.2	The evolving role of local government in tourism planning.....	51
6.2.1	Enablement of tourism: local government functions	51
6.2.2	Management of tourism’s impacts: local government functions	52
6.3	Rationale for a Sustainable Tourism Strategy.....	54
6.3.1	The New Zealand Tourism Strategy	55
6.4	Recommendations for local government authorities on the West Coast	55
REFERENCES	57
APPENDIX 1	THE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ACT AND DISTRICT PLANS	63

List of Tables

Table 1	Selected Industries for the West Coast and New Zealand, Feb. 1997	4
Table 2	Tourism Businesses' Involvement with the Resource Consent Process.....	24
Table 3	Business Perceptions of Increased Utility Spending	35

List of Plates

Plate 1	The Fox Glacier Refuse Site is full and a new facility for solid waste disposal is needed.	33
Plate 2	An example of the generic Transit NZ sign and one privately owned.	34
Plate 3	The Waiho River, near Franz Josef, is one area where the WCRC undertakes flood management.....	40

List of Figures

Figure 1	Location and Size of Businesses	9
Figure 2	How Effectively does Your District Council Enable Tourism? Business Perspectives.....	12
Figure 3	District Council Tourism Amenities:.....	16
Figure 4	Business Rating for District Council’s Management of Tourism’s Environmental Impacts	21
Figure 5	Business Rating for District Council Management of Tourism’s Social Impacts ..	22
Figure 6	Likert Scale: Resource Consent Process is Time Consuming	25
Figure 7	Likert Scale: Resource Consent Process is Costly.....	26
Figure 8	Likert Scale: Restrictive Nature of Resource Consents.....	27
Figure 9	Likert Scale: Public Input into Resource Consent Process.....	28
Figure 10	District Council Utilities for Tourism: Business Perspectives	31
Figure 11	How Effectively Does the District Council Manage its Conflicting Interests? Business Perspectives	37
Figure 12	Business Rating of WCRC Management of Tourism’s Environmental Impacts...	41
Figure 13	Promotion by Regional Tourism Organisation: Business Perspectives.....	44

Acknowledgements

This research was funded by the Foundation for Research, Science and Technology; Tourism Strategic Portfolio Output. This report forms part of a series of eight constituent reports on Tourism in Westland, which in turn is one of four case studies in the programme 'Improved Management of Tourist Flows and Effects' (Contracts: LIN 504, LIN 602, LIN X0004).

Ethical approval for the overall research programme was provided under Lincoln University Human Research Subjects Ethics Committee's ethical approval (Ref: HSEC 97/21) and verified for this case study.

The authors gratefully acknowledge the contribution of the staff of District Councils, and NGO members who gave freely of their time to participate in this study.

Finally, we acknowledge the considerable typing and formatting efforts of Michelle Collings, the TRREC Project Administrator.

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The number of visitors to the West Coast appears to be growing by approximately 15 per cent per year over the previous four years¹. As a developing sector, tourism offers small, rural communities (such as those found on the West Coast) significant opportunities for socio-economic development, such as increased income and employment prospects for local residents.

However, while tourism brings a number of economic benefits, such as an increase in the sector's activities it may also have significant and adverse impacts on local residents and communities, as well as on the biophysical environment. For tourism to benefit the West Coast and remain a viable industry into the long-term, tourism development must be managed in a sustainable manner.

Local government plays an important role in promoting sustainable tourism development. Territorial local authorities are responsible for providing infrastructure and amenities the sector requires. As many tourism activities occur at the local level, local government is also well situated to avoid, remedy or mitigate the sector's potential socio-economic and biophysical effects. A brief description of the Resource Management Act (RMA), New Zealand's principal planning legislation, as it applies to tourism is given in Appendix 1.

Tourism stakeholders, such as tourism-related businesses and NGOs, are those most directly affected by the growth of visitor numbers to the Region. While these stakeholders typically rely on continued levels of visitor numbers to ensure long-term economic viability, they are also members of the community and are aware of the sector's potential for adverse social and biophysical impacts. Through their involvement with the industry, tourism stakeholders also experience the effects local government's tourism planning and management can have on the sector. These stakeholders can offer informed assessment on the effectiveness of local government's operations.

Core concepts relating to sustainable tourism management and local governments role in facilitating this are introduced next, prior to a brief description of the case study area.

1.1.1 Sustainable Tourism Development

In 1994, the World Tourism Organisation defined sustainable tourism development as:

Sustainable tourism development meets the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunity for the future. It is envisaged as leading to management of all resources in such a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life support systems.

¹ Tourist volumes and trends to the West Coast are reported in Report No. 20, Moran and Simmons (2001).

Sustainable tourism products are products which are operated in harmony with the local environment, community, and cultures so that these become the permanent beneficiaries not the victims of tourism development.

(World Tourism Organisation (1994) cited from Agenda 21 for the Travel and Tourism Industry (1996):30)

Many authors note tourism's interest in sustainable development is 'logical' as the sector sells human and biophysical environments as its products. Tourism's long-term economic development is therefore dependent on the continued well-being of these environments that form the core of its business (Hall, 1997:23). As one of New Zealand's largest industries, tourism has the potential to contribute to the sustainable development of host communities in which it operates.

Currently, however, information concerning the roles and functions of the public and private sectors in terms of developing a sustainable tourism product is limited in New Zealand (Hall, 1997; Kearsley, 1997; PCE, 1997).

1.1.2 Functions of Local Government

At the level of local government, the role of elected members and officers is to translate the principle of sustainable tourism development into action.

Territorial local authorities (district and city councils) have two principal functions relating to tourism: the 'enablement' of tourism development, and the management of tourism's effects.

To enable tourism development, territorial local authorities:

- Support economic development initiatives, such as funding for Regional Tourism Organisations, business feasibility studies or rating relief,
- Help develop local amenities and attractions, such as zoos, art galleries, parks and reserves, and,
- Promote events, such as cultural or sporting festivals.

To manage tourism's adverse social and environmental impacts, territorial local authorities:

- Regulate tourism development, for example, setting environmental, health and safety standards,
- Plan utilities, such as transport networks, waste management, and sewerage, and,
- Monitor tourism development and trends, such as host satisfaction surveys and environmental monitoring.

Under the *Local Government Act 1974*, any direct role *Regional Councils* might play in tourism management is restricted to those activities 'permitted by' territorial local authorities within its jurisdiction. Currently, however, regional councils have an indirect role in sustainable tourism development that mainly involves managing the adverse biophysical impacts of tourism and other activities from an integrated regional perspective.

Regional Tourism Organisations play an enabling role in sustainable tourism development, especially with respect to regional promotion. Their functions can also include monitoring

tourism growth and development trends. Regional Tourism Organisations also co-ordinate initiatives of local promotional agencies, facilitate industry participation in tourism planning and promote efficient resource use.

1.2 The West Coast Case Study Area

The West Coast Region is located between the Southern Alps and the Tasman Sea on the western side of the South Island of New Zealand. Extending 550kms from Kahurangi Point to Awarua Point, it is the fifth biggest region in the country (Narayan, 1998:4). The Coast is isolated from neighbouring regions (Canterbury, Nelson/Tasman and Southland) by high mountains, and the alpine fault running the entire length of the region has produced a dynamic and unusual landscape distinct from many other parts of New Zealand (WCRC, 1999:2).

The region's heavy rainfall encourages lush growth in natural forests, which cover 62 per cent (1.5 million hectares) of the West Coast (Statistics New Zealand, 1999:27). Due to its natural and ecological characteristics, the region is home to five National Parks and, in recognition of the unique natural landscape, parts of the region have been placed within the South-West New Zealand World Heritage Area (WCRC, 1999:2).

1.2.1 Socio-economic Description

Although the West Coast is New Zealand's fifth largest land area, the region is the most sparsely populated in New Zealand, with only 1.4 people per square kilometre compared with a national density of 13.1 people (Statistics New Zealand, 1999:14). The West Coast region is distinguished from the rest of New Zealand by its unique cultural history and way of life. At the 1996 Census, the number of One Person Households was higher than the national average, and the Coast had a higher percentage of persons without any educational qualifications. Coasters also had lower access to specialised services, such as healthcare, than other New Zealanders (Narayan, 1998:3).

In 1996, the per capita personal income for West Coasters aged 15 and above was 18 per cent lower than the national average. In 1996, among the three constituent Districts, Buller District had the highest unemployment rate with 9.5 per cent, Grey District had 7.5 per cent and Westland significantly lower with 5.4 per cent. At that time, the average national unemployment rate was 7.7 per cent (Statistics New Zealand, 1999:19).

The West Coast is well endowed with resources such as coal, gold, timber, pastoral lands and fisheries, and contains the largest area of indigenous forest and unmodified land tracts in the country. The region's economy has traditionally relied on natural resource exploitation, although more recently, other industries have developed, such as the accommodation and hospitality sectors (Statistics New Zealand, 1999:25). Table 3 illustrates the major West Coast industries.

Table 1
Selected Industries for the West Coast and New Zealand, Feb. 1997

Industry	West Coast (%)	New Zealand (%)
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	13.3	4.4
Accommodation, cafes, restaurants	10.8	3.9
Construction	9.9	13.8
Property and business services	8.8	19.1
Manufacturing	7.8	9.1
Wholesale trade	3.9	7.8
Health and community services	3.7	4.3
Mining	3.3	0.2
Finance and insurance	2.7	4.6
Government admin. and defence	2.1	0.9

Source: Statistics New Zealand, Annual Business Frame Update quoted from Statistics New Zealand, 1999:25

1.2.2 The West Coast Tourism Industry

The West Coast's rich cultural and natural heritage provides a firm basis for its tourism industry, the largest industry in the region in terms of employment and financial return. The Coast's most popular attractions are the Franz Josef and Fox Glaciers, and the Pancake Rocks at Punakaiki. Forests, cave and karst systems, arts and crafts, and several historic towns exist throughout the region (Statistics New Zealand, 1999:14). The tourism industry involves approximately 10.8 per cent of businesses across the West Coast, compared with 3.9 per cent nationally², and the sector is at its busiest during the March quarter (Statistics New Zealand, 1999:28). In 1997, there were three times the national proportion of businesses in the accommodation, cafes and restaurants industries, a higher proportion of businesses than any other region, reflecting the importance of tourism to the region.

In terms of visitor's ability to access the West Coast, the Region has one of the least developed roading systems in New Zealand, mainly due to rugged terrain. The main State Highway (SHW 6) runs parallel to the coastline and parts of the region further inland are inaccessible, with most lateral roads providing access to river valleys of old gold-mining and timber-felling areas. Heavy rain and slips can often damage roads, cutting off access to areas. Traffic volumes are low compared nationally, at 772 million vehicle kilometres per year. Several railway lines, in addition to the Tranz Alpine Express, are in operation, as are regular bus services (Statistics New Zealand, 1999:28-29).

² For a detailed assessment of tourism's economic impacts, readers are directed to Report No. 26 in this series (Butcher *et. al.*, 2001).

1.2.3 Local Government

Local government on the West Coast currently operates as a two-tier structure, with the West Coast Regional Council overseeing the region, and three territorial local authorities administering smaller districts within the region. The size of the region, its geography and isolated settlements pose challenges for the delivery of transport other local government service deliveries (WCRC, 1999:2). Of the Coast's total land area, 87 per cent is Crown owned with 11 per cent in private holdings. Only 21 per cent of the region is rateable (Narayan, 1998:4). Due to the lack of rateable land and the subsequent financial shortfall, all local government bodies on the West Coast face difficulties fulfilling their mandates.

The West Coast Regional Council (WCRC)

The WCRC is the smallest regional council in New Zealand, in terms of personnel and rating base. However, it has a significant land area to administer, and with a low population to fund this administration, its Regional Council rates are generally high compared with other regions (WCRC, 2000:1). This was confirmed in a report prepared for the Minister for Local Government in 1996, which showed the regional rates per population as being the highest in the country (Gross, 1996). The situation on the West Coast, in terms of rating, is further exacerbated by lack of dividends from port companies which many other Regional Councils enjoy in other parts of New Zealand.

The WCRC's mission statement is 'to work with the people of the West Coast to sustainably manage the environment for the social, cultural and economic well being of present and future generations'. The Council is made up of staff and six councillors, with two representatives from each of Buller, Grey and Westland Constituencies. The WCRC uses a Committee structure to govern its administration and operations. These are a separate Resource Management and Finance Committee. All councillors are members of both committees. Two tangata whenua (representatives of local Maori groups) are also represented on the Resource Management Committee (adapted from WCRC, 2000:1-10).

Environmental management is WCRC's major area of operation. Its responsibilities include working to control TB in possums, which are a threat to the region's agriculturally-based economy. The WCRC undertakes environmental monitoring as part its responsibilities under the *Resource Management Act 1991*, particularly consent compliance and water quality. River management, civil defence and emergency management procedures, particularly flood warning, are also important concerns for the Regional Council.

Territorial Local Authorities: Westland, Grey and Buller District Councils

The West Coast region is divided into three constituent districts: Westland District (the largest in terms of land area), Grey District (the smallest), and the Buller District (falling in between). The territorial local authorities within these districts are the Westland District Council, the Grey District Council and the Buller District Council respectively (Narayan, 1998:4). District Councils are responsible for socio-economic issues within their constituencies, including:

- economic development,
- roading and street lighting,
- water supply and collection,
- solid waste collection,

- land subdivision,
- development approval and inspection,
- settlement upgrades and maintenance,
- parks and reserves,
- cemeteries,
- community halls,
- sports and recreation facilities,
- libraries, visitor information, and,
- other community development services.

The large land areas these Councils administer, along with a diffused, small and isolated population, leaves little rateable land available. While average residential and commercial rates in the Westland District are slightly lower than the national average of rates in other New Zealand districts, residential and commercial rates in the Grey and Buller Districts are significantly higher (Ash *pers comm.*, 2000; Reeves, *pers comm.*, 2001; Vroon *pers comm.*, 2000). In addition, many services that local authorities typically provide in more developed areas, such as rubbish collection, sewerage and water reticulation, are not provided by the West Coast District Councils in many areas. District councils also fund and run Visitor Information Services in the main towns of Westport, Greymouth and Hokitika.

The Buller District Council (BDC)

The BDC's mission statement is 'to serve the residents of the Buller District, conscious of their needs, by providing facilities and services, and creating an appropriate environment for progress and development' (BDC, 2000:1). The BDC comprises 12 elected members – 11 Councillors and one Mayor. The District is divided into three 'Wards' - Seddon with three elected representatives, Westport with five, and Inangahua with three. The Mayor is elected 'at large'. The Inangahua Ward also has a Community Board with the three BDC representatives and six other elected members. The BDC has three Standing Committees including *Corporate & Community Services*, *Planning & Regulatory*, and *Operations* (BDC, 2000:3). The BDC formed the Buller Economic Development Board in Sept 2000. This Board acts as the advisory panel on economic development matters for the Buller District Council and are also responsible for allocating the Council's initial share of funds from the West Coast Settlement. As part of its role in tourism activities within the District, the BDC also funds the Westport Visitor Information Centre and several camping sites within the District (Vroon, *pers comm.*, 2000).

Grey District Council (GDC)

Grey is the smallest district in terms of land mass on the West Coast but is the largest district in terms of resident population. The Grey District is also home to the region's largest urban settlement, Greymouth. The GDC's mission statement is 'to provide facilities and services which enhance the quality of life and meet the needs of the District's Residents' (GDC, 2000:3). The Council is made up of a mayor, a deputy mayor and seven councillors from three Wards. To ensure council-community liaison, the Northern Ward has a five member Community Board and the GDC has established a separate economic development group called GROW. This Group has four working Committees, one each for Industry, Tourism,

Community and Commerce catering for the major commercial sectors within the Grey District. The GDC also funds the Greymouth Visitor Information Centre and a number of other attractions, such as the Greymouth Art Gallery, as part of its role in tourism development (Ash, *pers comm.*, 2000).

Westland District Council (WDC)

Westland is a long, narrow district with isolated settlements and over 80 per cent of the District is non-rateable Crown-owned land. The WDC's mission statement is 'to make Westland a better place to live for its residents and ratepayers' (WDC, 2000:5). The Council comprises staff, a mayor, a deputy mayor and ten elected councillors from three Wards. The management team comprises a General Manager, a Planning and Regulatory Manager and an Operations Manager (WDC, 2000:4). Like the Buller and Grey District Councils, WDC also has a Council committee known as 'Westland's Working', which is responsible for promoting economic development within the District. The WDC has contracted management of the Hokitika Visitor Information Centre to operate as a private enterprise, although it also receives partial funding from the WDC (Elliot, *pers comm.*, 2000).

The Regional Tourism Organisation: Tourism West Coast

Tourism West Coast is one of New Zealand's 26 regional tourism organisations (RTOs) mandated to promote and market the West Coast region and to represent the region's tourism industry. Its mission statement is 'to promote the West Coast as a unique domestic and international tourism destination thereby maximising the long term benefits for West Coasters'. The Organisation is funded out of a commercial/special tourism rate collected by the three West Coast District Councils, but receives no funding from the WCRC or central government. Tourism operators in the region can also pay voluntary membership fees, established according to business size and annual turnover.

Tourism West Coast currently lacks sufficient expertise and funds to plan for sustainable tourism development in the region. Tourism West Coast is managed by a seven-member board, two members appointed by each District Council and the board then selects the final member. The Board employs a Chief Executive Officer and a Marketing Manager (Wilson, *pers comm.* 2000).

1.3 Objectives of this Study

The objective of this study is to examine the perspectives West Coast tourism stakeholders hold about the local government's emerging roles and responsibilities for tourism planning in the Region.

Local government authorities examined include the Buller, Grey and Westland District Councils, the West Coast Regional Council and Tourism West Coast, (the Regional Tourism Organisation, which forms the promotional 'arm' of the three District Councils). 'Tourism stakeholders' includes tourism-related businesses and NGOs as well as local government staff.

At a recent conference on tourism research in New Zealand, local government was criticised for its inability to respond to the challenge of promoting sustainable tourism development. This concern is attributed to local governments' lack of understanding about tourism, its

needs and the roles local government can play to promote sustainable tourism development (Simpson, 2000). This report aims to provide feedback to local government in a way that is useful for these authorities to further develop approaches to sustainable tourism planning and management.

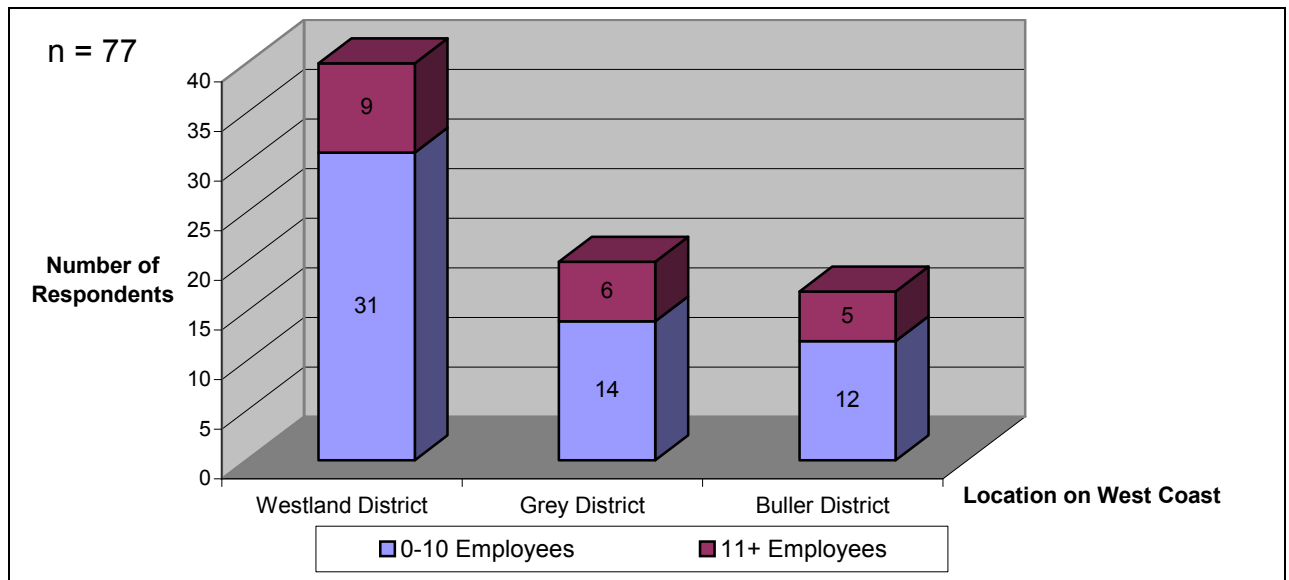
1.4 Research Methods

The above objective was achieved as follows:

- Literature review: Initially, international and New Zealand literature relating to the role of the public sector in promoting sustainable tourism development was reviewed. This review provided an understanding of local government's functions and responsibilities for tourism planning.
- Interviews with local government staff: To gain an understanding of current tourism management frameworks at the level of local government on the West Coast, in-depth interviews were conducted with local government staff. Planning and Economic Development officers from each of the three District Councils were interviewed. Representatives from the West Coast Regional Council and the Regional Tourism Organisation were also interviewed. In total, six interviews were conducted with local government officers.
- Stakeholder interviews: Interviews, based on a structured questionnaire, were conducted with a cross-section of tourism-related businesses on the West Coast (n=77).

The tourism-related businesses interviewed were selected from the Regional Tourism Organisation's regional product manual (Tourism West Coast, 2000a). Of the 77 businesses interviewed, 74 per cent are small to medium enterprises with fewer than ten employees; the remainder are larger establishments. Figure 1 shows the businesses interviewed, their size and location on the West Coast.

Figure 1
Location and Size of Businesses



The questionnaire given to tourism-related business (Appendix 2) was designed to elicit responses on:

- Perceptions of sustainable tourism development.
- District Council provision of utilities for tourism (such solid waste disposal), amenities for tourism (such as visitor information services) and the management of tourism's social and environmental impacts.
- Promotion and marketing role of 'Tourism West Coast', the Regional Tourism Organisation.
- The role of the West Coast Regional Council relating to management of tourism's social and environmental effects.
- Implementation of the Resource Management Act 1991.
- Participation in the development of tourism-related strategies and plans by the District and Regional Councils.

In addition to this, qualitative interviews were also conducted with 13 tourism-related NGOs across the Region. 'Tourism-related NGOs' comprise a diverse mix of interests with regard to tourism and include four economic development agencies, three residents' associations and six promotional associations, such as the Buller and Inangahua Promotions Associations.

1.5 Report Structure

This report first analyses various stakeholder's views to the two primary functions of local government. These are the 'enabling' of tourism (Chapter 2) and the 'management of tourism's' impacts (Chapter 3). This section is complimented with a brief commentary on current participation in tourism planning and the potentially conflicting nature of these core functions.

Regional issues are considered next, with a review of the responsibilities and functions of the Regional Council and Tourism West Coast and stakeholders perceptions of these (Chapter 4). The monitoring activities of local government authorities that relate to tourism are then discussed (Chapter 5)

A discussion section highlights the need for better understanding and integration of the various stakeholders interested in sustainable tourism development, and calls for the development of integrated regional tourism strategy.

Chapter 2

Enabling Role of District Councils in Tourism Development

The following three chapters investigate the perspectives of tourism-related stakeholders in the West Coast regarding the various roles the Region's District Councils play in planning for sustainable tourism development.

Chapter 4 discusses these stakeholders' views on the District Councils' encouragement of visitor growth and tourism development through their role of tourism 'enablement'. Chapter 5 focuses on the territorial authorities' management of tourism's biophysical, social and economic impacts, while Chapter 6 asks whether these two District Council functions in tourism planning create a conflict of interest for local authorities.

2.1 Introduction: 'Enablement' of Tourism

In New Zealand, the specific approaches territorial authorities currently use to support and encourage tourism development vary between districts. This chapter will examine businesses' views about the specific mechanisms territorial authorities use to enable tourism development, including:

- Economic development initiatives and strategies.
- Provision of amenities and attractions.
- Event tourism.

Definition

'Enablement' of tourism by District Councils is defined as more than just the promotion and marketing of a region. By enabling tourism, territorial authorities aim to advance economic development opportunities through tourism. Local government initiatives include public relations, support for tourism marketing organisations and trusts, promotional and information activities, sister city links, research, training, festivals, events and entertainment.

2.1.1 Benefits of Tourism

Tourism is advocated as a way for rural regions to build and diversify their economies (Thorn, 1994). Tourists bring 'fresh money' into a host economy (McIntyre, 1993), and this initial spending by tourists has a multiplier effect, providing increased income and employment for residents as tourism operators spend their earnings. Tourism also provides employment. As a service industry, tourism is labour intensive and, as with income generation, has similar multiplier effects on employment (Lim, 1991a).

2.1.2 Enabling Tourism

Enabling visitor growth and tourism development have not been traditional functions of local government, who have often seen their role as limited to providing the utilities and amenities required and administering necessary planning and development processes (Kearsley, 1997: 53). Recently, however, tourism is being more actively supported by local government as part of initiatives to spark regional economic and development opportunities (Ministry of Tourism, 1993b).

Local authorities recognise tourism brings economic, social and even biophysical benefits to host communities. Tourism is also seen as an area of investment that allows councils to fulfil their dual responsibilities of economic development and the provision of facilities and services for local communities, as well as for visitors and the industry itself.

Duncan (1995) has identified that local authorities are beginning to emphasise tourism's role in regional economic development, due largely to the sectors above-average growth potential. Local authorities already provide several amenities and attractions that service tourism, such as reserves and zoos. As the tourism industry is highly fragmented, collaborative efforts between public and private sectors can foster more successfully economic opportunities.

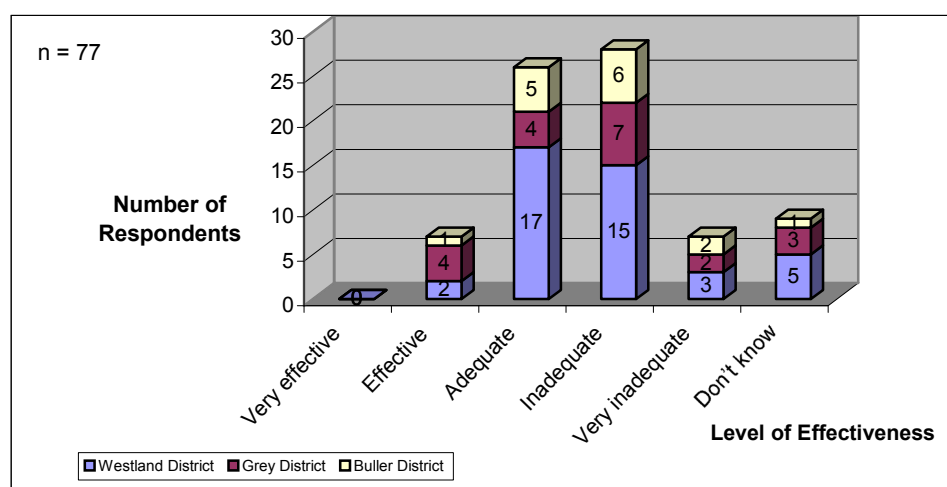
However, despite the fact that much of tourism 'happens' at the local level, the role territorial local authorities in New Zealand play in enabling sustainable tourism development remains largely undefined and uncritiqued. At present in New Zealand, territorial authorities are left to determine what their 'appropriate' roles in enabling tourism will be (Harland, 1993:106).

2.2 The West Coast Situation

As discussed here, local government can play a significant part in supporting and encouraging sustainable tourism development. On the West Coast however, the approach local authorities take to enabling tourism is largely constrained by their lack of resources. As the Coast's major draw cards are its 'clean, green environment' and the outdoor activities available on public land, primarily in the conservation estate (which makes up almost 87% of the region), many of the 'enablement' roles territorial authorities could take are performed, by default, by the Department of Conservation.

Tourism-related businesses across the region were asked to rate the 'enabling' roles their District Councils provided for tourism. Business respondents' assessments of territorial authorities' enablement of tourism development are shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2
How Effectively Does Your District Council Enable Tourism? Business Perspectives



The rating businesses gave to their District Councils' enablement of tourism tended to reflect the level and type of District Council involvement in tourism. Likewise, the sophistication of District Councils' enablement of tourism varies according to visitor number and the level of tourism development within the District.

The Westland District Council, which receives approximately half of all visitors to the Coast, plays the most sophisticated roles to enable tourism. Its activities include wide-ranging economic initiatives, a strategy that acknowledges tourism's importance to the District, a promotional website and a number of festivals and events that attract visitors to the district (Elliot, *pers. comm.*, 2000). Seventeen Westland District businesses (40%) gave an 'adequate' rating of their councils' direction and enablement functions, compared with 15 tourism businesses (20%) in Grey, and three in Buller (33%).

Compared with Westland, the level of involvement Buller and Grey District Councils have in enabling tourism is limited and the sector is less developed in these Districts (Vroon, *pers. comm.*, 2000). While visitors to Westland may stay two days/nights, visitors to Grey and Buller typically stay only one day/night. Business respondents in Buller (40%) and Grey (35%) generally rated their District Councils' enablement of tourism as 'inadequate'.

When asked to explain their evaluation, tourism-related business respondents gave comments which reflect what businesses perceive to be their Territorial Authority's general attitude towards tourism, and the concerns this perceived attitude causes. Respondents' top five comments include:

- Territorial Authorities see their function as only providing the 'bare minimum' for tourism, and need to provide more enablement and direction.
- Tourism is only one industry territorial authorities' support and 'enable'.
- Territorial Authorities lack understanding about tourism's benefits.
- The need for Territorial Authorities to consult more with stakeholders to ensure their direction and approaches were desirable and effective.
- Lack of strategic planning for tourism enablement.

2.3 Economic Development Initiatives and Strategies

Local authorities on the West Coast enable sustainable tourism development by encouraging and facilitating private sector investment in development activities via development plans and strategies, the annual planning process, and the Regional West Coast Development Trust.

2.3.1 District Economic Development Strategies

On the West Coast, District Council economic strategies enable tourism by facilitating (rather than leading or directing) private investment and by removing council-related barriers to development where possible. For example, the Westland District Council provides information and funding for initiatives that help private industry to establish ventures, but does not set up these ventures itself, nor specifies in which ventures private industry should invest. This can be attributed to limits on council funding and the public sector ethos that government should not do what private industry is more capable of (Ash, *pers comm.*, 2000; Ateljevic and Doorne, 2000).

Over the last 18 months, District Councils on the West Coast have also appointed Economic Development Officers to facilitate investment, increase employment and generally encourage economic development within their Districts. Officers achieve these goals by providing potential developers with information on existing regional assets, assistance when applying to boards for development grants and help with necessary planning procedures.

The Westland District Council has taken further initiatives to enable development compared with the other two District Councils on the West Coast. The council has formulated a strategic plan, *For the Wild at Heart*, to facilitate development and aims to provide information and advice on business plans and marketing, including information sourcing for producers and suppliers, on resource and building consents, and on other regulatory information (Westland District Council, Economic Development Plan, 2000, WDC website).

In May 2000, as part of its economic development initiatives, the District Council established the 'Westland's Working' group (comprising councillors, the Economic Development Officer and local business and community representatives) to identify economic opportunities for industry in the District, including tourism. Local entrepreneurs can apply to this group for funding assistance to establish new ventures. However, proposals must be economically sustainable and currently 'Westland's Working' will only fund feasibility studies, rather than business establishment costs (Westland's Working, 2000).

The Grey District Council believes initiatives for economic development should come from outside the public sector, and has initiated a joint community and business led committee (called 'GROW Tourism') to identify and implement economic development initiatives with Council assistance. The Economic Development Officer regularly liaises between the Grey District Council and 'GROW Tourism' representatives over collaborative initiatives, such as town beautification and promotional projects (Ash, *pers comm.*, 2000; Roper, *pers comm.*, 2000).

Buller's two Economic Development Officers were appointed in September 2000 and, as the unit is still drafting its economic development strategy, the District Council has yet to form similar community-business based relationships. However, the Buller District Council currently liaises with, and partially funds, the District's largest tourism organisation, Buller Promotions Association. Officers have recently begun coordinating over economic development projects with the Buller Community Development Company, as both organisations share similar aims and aspirations for the District (Vroon, *pers comm.*, 2000).

Due to their recent beginnings, it is difficult to quantify the impacts economic development strategies and Officers have had on promoting sustainable tourism development at the District level on the West Coast. However, qualitative feedback from tourism-related businesses and community organisations indicates their relationship with Officers and councils themselves is fairly positive. Regular dialogues take place and collaboration has occurred on a number of initiatives (Ash, *pers comm.*, 2000; Elliot, *pers comm.*, 2000; Vroon, *pers comm.*, 2000). A number of business experienced instances where their expectations have not met those of council, and Economic Development Officers have been able to assist in the resolution of this disagreement.

2.4 The Annual Planning Process

Annual Plans set the one to three year objectives for local authorities within their district and outline the methods and financial mechanisms used to achieve these (Local Government Forum, 1993: Appendix 5.3). During annual planning rounds, community groups, such as residents' associations, apply to councils for assistance with specific 'public good' projects when they see a role for local government to assist with those projects (Weber, *pers comm.*, 2000). District councils can enable sustainable tourism development through their assistance with these community-initiated projects.

Often, a number of applications are received and council must select the most cost effective projects that will offer the greatest return to the community. Local government's public purse has limits and local councils have criteria to assess which applications will be accepted (Ash, *pers comm.*, 2000). As they are spending public funds, local authorities must ensure a 'reasonable' return on investment to ratepayers.

A number of tourism-related NGO's, such as local business development or area promotion groups, have applied to local authorities during the annual planning process for assistance with tourism-related projects on the West Coast (Weber, *pers comm.*, 2000; Roper, *pers comm.*, 2000). Projects typically include town beautification or events, and Council assistance takes the form of funding, expertise, materials or labour. The number of project requests granted and, again, the facilitation skills of council staff affected the level of satisfaction NGOs had with this process. While District Councils have clear criteria for economic returns to ratepayers before development initiatives are approved under annual planning processes, their criteria for social and environmental 'returns' and mitigation of costs are less comprehensive.

2.5 Provision of Amenities and Attractions

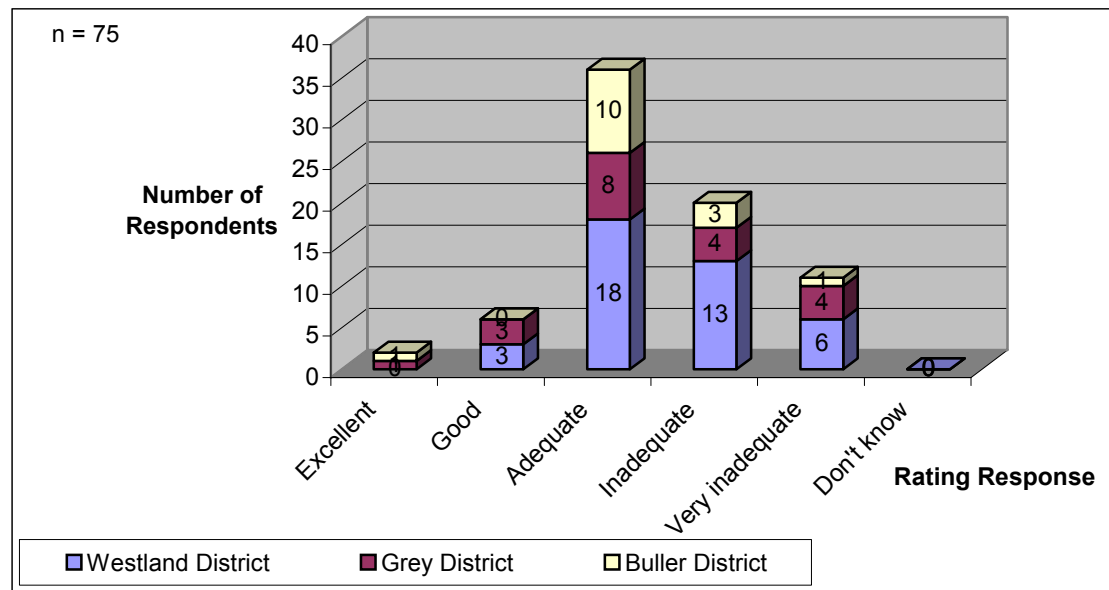
Amenities and attractions are not the core utilities local government provides for tourism, such as sewerage and water supply, but are 'add-on' services and facilities. They include parks, reserves, amenity areas, sport complexes, pools, libraries, art galleries, museums, zoos, conference venues, public toilets, car parking, visitor information facilities, historic precincts, natural heritage developments and camping grounds (Ministry of Tourism, 1993b:5)

2.5.1 The Current Situation

Currently, West Coast District Councils do not provide many 'add-on' tourism amenities compared with other local authorities around New Zealand. The current level of provision reflects the low ratepayer base and lack of resources and is compounded by the isolation of many West Coast settlements. The public sector ethos that it is inappropriate for government to be overly involved in private sector development also influences the willingness for Councils to fund amenities for tourism. A more fitting District Council approach is seen as catalyst or facilitator to private sector development (Ash, *pers comm.*, 2000; Elliot, *pers comm.*, 2000; Vroon, *pers comm.*, 2000; Ministry of Tourism, 1993b).

Tourism-related businesses across the West Coast were asked to assess their District Council's current provision of amenities for tourism. Their responses are listed in Figure 3.

Figure 3
District Council Tourism Amenities:
Business Perspectives



Forty-two businesses in the Region (55%), rated their District Council's provision of amenities for tourism as 'adequate' or 'good', with 34 businesses giving a rating of 'inadequate' to 'very inadequate' (44%). Four operators in Grey gave the amenities provided by their District Council a rating of 'good' (20%), compared with three in Westland (7%) and zero in Buller. This is likely because the Grey District Council provides a number of amenities for tourism in Greymouth, the major West Coast township, and the majority of operators are based in or around this town. Operators in Buller and Westland are more likely to be located in remote settlements with little or no amenities for tourism provided by their District Council.

During qualitative interviews, tourism-related NGOs across the Region were also asked to assess their District Council's provision of amenities for tourism. The majority of tourism-related businesses and some NGOs feel their District Council does not provide enough amenities and attractions for tourism. Amenities most commonly noted as lacking in the region, particularly in popular locations are:

- Public toilets.
- Parks and reserves.
- Campervan dumpsites.
- Town beautification projects, such as planter boxes.

The majority of respondents, 80 per cent of businesses and approximately two thirds of NGOs, believe District Councils should increase spending on amenities for tourism. Several respondents realise the political implications of using ratepayer funds to provide facilities for tourism. Recently, a significant number of ratepayers have objected to 'subsidising' the tourism industry (Narayan, *pers. comm.*, 2000; Ash, *pers. comm.*, 2000).

2.6 Event Tourism

A final role for District Councils in enabling sustainable tourism development is by promoting the organisation of events and festivals. Event tourism has been defined by Getz (1991) as:

The systematic planning, development and marketing of festivals and special events as tourism attractions, development catalysts and image builders for attractions and destination areas

Cited in Fry (1993) Appendix 4

‘Event tourism’ is an activity in which territorial authorities are becoming increasingly interested due to its potential to: stimulate the development of new facilities, to promote the host area, and the significant economic benefits it can bring to an area, such as increased employment (Fry, 1993; Kean, 1993:46; Ministry of Tourism, 1993b). Local authorities may also act as a co-ordinator of promotional efforts within their district and may support tourism through annual grants to local promotional boards and events organisers (Ministry of Tourism, 1993b).

On the West Coast, however, District Councils lack resources to support many events. Where supported, events promote the Coast’s profile in the tourism market and additional visitor spending, such as the Wild Foods Festival that attracts increasing visitors and revenue to Hokitika every March (Westland District Council, 1999 Annual Report, WDC website). Territorial authorities on the Coast also appoint Events Coordinators to administer and coordinate community events. In the past community or business members have put forward ideas for events, and councils evaluate on a case-by-case basis whether to support these initiatives. An Events Coordinator may then be appointed along with other interested members of the community to coordinate the event and an application put to Council for funding assistance, usually through the annual planning round (Ash, *pers. comm.* 2000).

2.7 ‘Enablement’: Discussion

Generally, tourism-related businesses would like to see their District Councils take a more active role to enable tourism development within the Region. Local businesses gave a higher rating to the Westland District Council, which is more involved in tourism enablement than the Grey or Buller District Councils. According to business perspectives, current concerns regarding local government’s enablement of tourism on the West Coast include:

- Lack of information regarding tourism trends and development.
- Lack of strategic plans for the ‘enablement’ of sustainable tourism development at the regional and district level.
- Lack of ratepayer and District Councillor support for District Council support of the tourism sector which is generally perceived to be made at the cost of residents.
- Tourism must contend with other industries for District Councils’ resources for economic development.
- Lack of adequate facilities to attract and provide for visitors, particularly public toilets.

At present in New Zealand, territorial authorities are left to determine what their ‘appropriate’ role in enabling tourism will be (Harland, 1993:106). On the West Coast, District Councils mainly enable tourism through the provision of amenities. Close to half of businesses in the region (48 %) rated their District Councils’ provision of amenities for tourism as ‘adequate’.

District Councils also enable tourism through economic development strategies and Annual Plans that facilitate, rather than lead or direct, private investment. This can be attributed to limits on council resources and the public sector ethos that government should not be overly involved in private industry (Ash, *pers comm.*, 2000; Ateljevic and Doorne, 2000).

Chapter 3

District Council Management of Tourism's Impacts

3.1 Introduction

After outlining the rationale for resource management, the two main approaches West Coast District Councils use to mitigate tourism's impacts are discussed in this chapter:

- Regulation of the effects of development.
- Provision of core utilities.

This chapter also provides a brief discussion on the stakeholder participation in tourism planning on the West Coast, and finishes with a review and assessment of the potential conflict inherent in the dual roles of tourism 'enablement' and 'management'.

3.2 Management of Tourism's Social and Environmental Impacts

Under New Zealand law and as public sector bodies, territorial authorities, including the District Councils on the West Coast, have certain functions and responsibilities requiring them to avoid, remedy or mitigate the social, biophysical and economic impacts increased visitor numbers and tourism activities can cause. By managing tourism's impacts, Councils also act to enable sustainable tourism development in their districts.

3.2.1 What is the rationale for management?

An influx of visitors can have social impacts on host communities, such as congestion or increased crime rates, biophysical impacts through increased waste production and damage to sensitive natural areas, and economic impacts, such as increased seasonal fluctuations. Tourism development also has social impacts, for example, tourist hotels influencing young people to consume more alcohol, and biophysical impacts through discharge to water and soil (PCE, 1997).

While tourism does enable economic development, many authors are quick to point out that, unless properly managed, the costs of tourism can exceed its benefits (Elliot, 1997; PCE, 1997; Kearsley, 1997; Lim, 1991a; Simmons, 1988). The activities and responsibilities of territorial authorities have the greatest direct influence on management of tourism's adverse social and biophysical impacts.

Authors have identified four ways that tourism's spill over costs call for public sector intervention. Firstly, tourism causes greater social impacts than other economic sectors as it depends on an influx of outsiders into the host community (Gunn, 1994). Secondly, several commentators have observed the need for a co-ordinating body or strategy to align tourism's diverse stakeholders (Elliot, 1997; Kearsley, 1996; Gunn, 1994; Kean, 1993; Sowman, 1993). Watt (1994) estimated that approximately 15,000 sole operators and small businesses are involved in New Zealand's tourism sector.

Thirdly, many tourism inputs are public or common goods that do not involve any market transactions, including scenery, resident hospitality, culture and public utilities, such as roading and sewerage. These common good inputs are subject to exploitation as they are not

excludable like private property and no price mechanism exists to regulate use (Birks, 1992; O'Fallon, 1994).

A fourth effect of tourism that justifies public sector involvement is the sector's highly competitive nature and volatility, as visitor demand constantly re-shapes the tourism product. Public sector management should be aware of the adverse effects the sector can cause and be prepared to alleviate them (Elliot, 1997:6). However, good tourism management by government should not add to these problems by over-regulation that is likely to stifle tourism's inherent dynamism.

Local government's ability to control many of tourism's social impacts is limited as these types of impacts are difficult to accurately identify (Simmons and Leiper, 1993). District Councils can aim to manage tourism's impacts by planning for and providing adequate utilities for visitor's needs, such as sewerage and waste disposal.

Local government regulations that govern development activities can also act to mitigate the sector's adverse impacts (Kearsley, 1997:53). The *Resource Management Act 1991* is the main local government statute that aims to avoid remedy or mitigate the adverse effects of development activities, including tourism. Several other statutes also prescribe health and safety standards, including those for tourism-related activities such as accommodation and food operators. These statutes include:

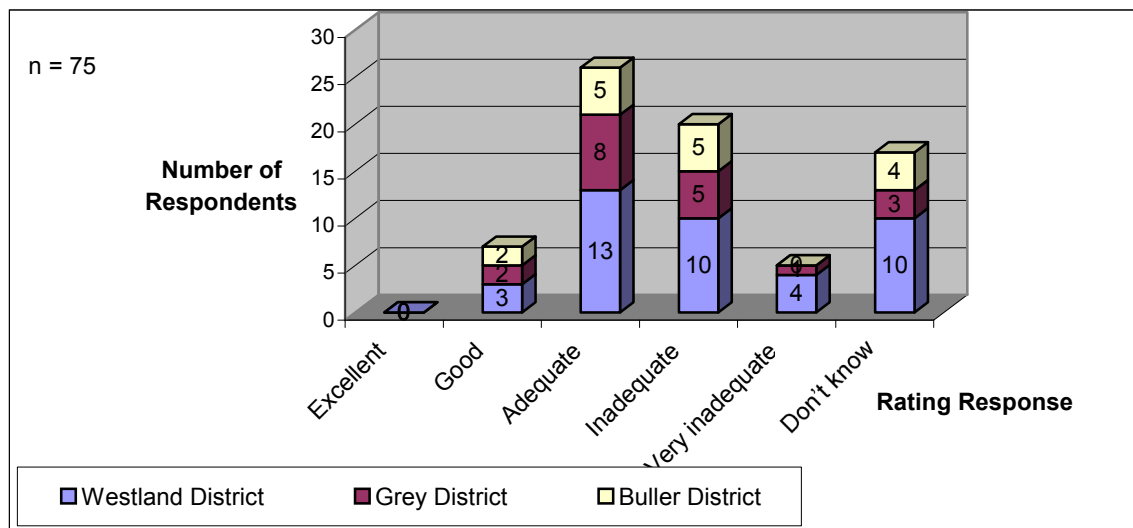
- Biosecurity Act 1993.
- Land Transport Act 1993.
- The Building Act 1991.
- Transit New Zealand Act 1989.
- Sale of Liquor Act 1989.
- Public Health Act 1956.

3.3 The Current Situation

The same legislative framework binds District Councils on the West Coast as other territorial local authorities (TLAs) in New Zealand. Both the Westland and Buller District Councils' have outlined specific tourism zones in their District Plans, in recognition of the special 'tourism values' certain areas possess. However, the Region's District Councils face difficulties in terms of providing core services and utilities, due to resource shortages and the isolation of many settlements.

Tourism-related businesses on the West Coast were asked to evaluate the overall effectiveness of their local District Council's management of tourism's impacts on the biophysical environment. Their responses are illustrated in Figure 4.

Figure 4
Business Rating for District Council's Management of Tourism's Environmental Impacts



Overall, businesses' rating of their Council's management of tourism's impacts on the biophysical environment are consistent across the Region. Twenty six (34%) of business respondents perceive their District Council's management of tourism environmental impacts to be 'adequate', with 20 (27%) giving an 'inadequate' rating. However, 17 (22%) of business respondents did not know how effectively or even what Councils' were doing to manage tourism's environmental impacts.

Significantly, when asked directly, eleven tourism-related businesses (15%) felt visitor numbers and tourism development have not yet reached a level that has noticeable impacts on the Region's biophysical environment. Many respondents are keen to increase visitor numbers and development activity within the sector.

However, the majority of these respondents note that, if visitor numbers and development continued to increase, as current trends indicate, there would be a definite need for closer Council management of tourism in the future. In addition, respondents in locations such as Punakaiki that experience high visitor numbers, saw a definite need for greater management and planning of tourism by territorial authorities. The environmental impacts respondents identified in these popular tourist areas included pressure on sensitive natural areas, such as underground Karst (cave) systems, and the dumping of solid waste and freedom camper effluent.

During qualitative interviews, tourism-related NGOs on the West Coast were asked to evaluate their District Council's management of tourism's biophysical impacts. Both business and NGO respondents gave similar qualitative comments about District Council's environmental management role. Respondent's top five comments include:

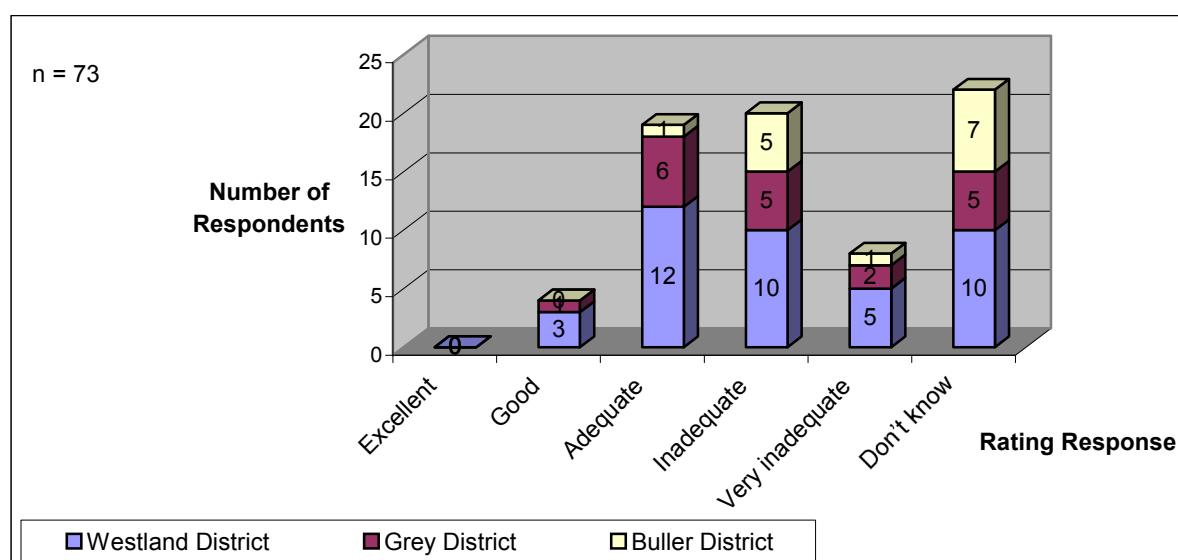
- Council's lack of environmental awareness.
- Ad hoc, reactive management, and a lack of strategic planning by Councils.
- The lack of solid waste disposal facilities provided.

- Concerns over the lack of control over freedom camper dumping.
- Concerns over the lack of enforcement of resource consent conditions.

Several respondents also see the Department of Conservation as the public sector agency largely responsible for managing tourism's environmental effects. This can be attributed to the fact public conservation estate makes up over 80 per cent of West Coast land area and the Department manages several popular tourism-related sites, such as the Pancake Rocks at Punakaiki, and the Franz Josef and Fox Glaciers.

Tourism-related businesses on the West Coast were also asked to assess the local District Council's management of tourism's social impacts. In terms of tourism's social effects on communities in the Region, respondents in areas that do not experience an extreme 'peak' in the tourist season do not think visitor numbers are causing adverse impacts. However, respondents in popular areas, such as the Glaciers and Punakaiki, identify concerns about the seasonal nature of employment and congestion in certain locations. Businesses were asked to rate their District Council's management of tourism's social impacts. Responses are illustrated in Figure 5.

Figure 5
Business Rating for District Council Management of Tourism's Social Impacts



Twenty-two tourism businesses on the Coast, (30%), did not know how Councils' activities related to managing tourism's social impacts, or were unaware of how effectively their Council was managing social impacts. Where evaluations are made, District Councils across the Coast are similarly rated, with 39 businesses (53%) perceiving Councils' management of tourism's impacts as only 'adequate' or 'inadequate', despite the Westland District Council playing a more active role than other District Councils to encourage positive community interactions with the industry (Elliott, *pers. comm.*, 2000).

During qualitative interviews, NGOs were also asked to assess their local Council's management of tourism's social impacts. Both business and NGO respondents gave similar qualitative comments about District Councils' management of tourism's social impacts. Top five comments include:

- Council lacks understanding about tourism's benefits and impacts.
- Lack of Council support for tourism.
- Inadequate planning for tourism.
- A lack of public consultation over tourism development and planning.
- The need to educate locals about tourism's benefits.

3.4 Perceptions of the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA)

Local government mainly uses the RMA, and the District Plans drawn up under its jurisdiction, to regulate impacts from development activities, including tourism. The Act is designed to provide a comprehensive, consistent and integrated process for allocating and managing resources (Kearsley, 1997:56-7).

The Westland and Buller District Councils have each incorporated separate tourism zones and policies within their District Plans – only 32.3 per cent of territorial authorities in New Zealand had done so by 1997 (Parkinson, 1997:34). These tourism-related sections recognise the 'tourism values' inherent within these areas, including the benefits and costs tourism development may bring. Under these sections, Councils also seek to ensure development that occurs within these locations is controlled and appropriate to their character (Westland District Council, Proposed District Plan, 5.4; Buller District Council, Operative District Plan, 2000:5.4).

The RMA has broad implications for tourism, as a sector that uses and develops natural resources. Firstly, District Plans affect the establishment of a tourism business, including the design and location of a development. Plans also control operational aspects, such as noise, parking, and signage and restrict where or how resources are used (Ministry of Tourism, 1993:5). Available resources and the values Councils place on tourism and development generally affect how the RMA is implemented.

3.4.1 The Resource Consent Process

Under the RMA, local government gives planning approval for developments through the resource consent process. Again, Councils' administrative resources and their attitude towards development activities both affect the operation of the resource consent process, which in turn influences the tourism sector's ability to develop. The part of the RMA tourism-related businesses are most likely to be familiar and to 'contend with' is the resource consent process.

The resource consent process enables some degree of public participation during District and Regional tourism planning. During resource consent hearings, stakeholders can submit their opinion of development proposals to decision-makers, allowing communities some control over the tourism activities and development that affect their region (Ministry of Tourism, 1993). The tourism sector also benefits from being able to participate, as concerns can be voiced during consent hearings to ensure development activities of other industries, such as agriculture, do not adversely damage natural environments or host communities, which are assets needed for sustainable tourism development.

Across the West Coast, tourism-related businesses and NGOs were asked if they had been involved in resource consent process and, if so, whether they had applied for a resource consent or had made a submission during a hearing process, either for or against an existing application. Responses are listed in Table 2.

Table 2
Tourism Businesses' Involvement with the Resource Consent Process

District	No Involvement	Regional Council		District Council	
		Consent Application	Hearing submission	Consent Application	Hearing submission
Westland	22	11	1	13	2
Grey	10	6	2	8	3
Buller	7	6	2	9	2
% of Respondents	51%	30%	7%	39%	9%

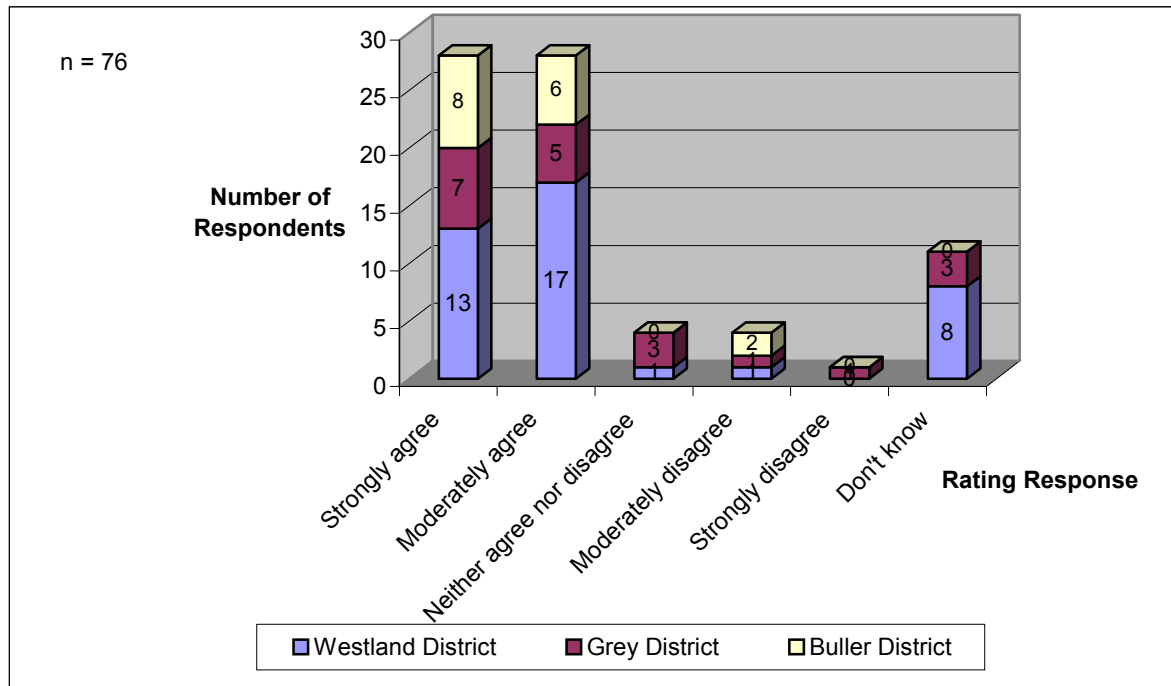
Just over half of the 77 businesses interviewed (51%) had not been involved in the resource consent process, either as applicants or submitters. Where tourism businesses had made consent applications, more operators have applied to their local District Council than to the West Coast Regional Council. This can be attributed to more of the sector's development activities typically falling under the District Plan's jurisdiction. Many major tourism developments require tourism operators to apply to both District and Regional Councils, and 16 business respondents (21%) had done so.

Tourism-related businesses were also asked to agree or disagree with a number of statements reflecting their perceptions of the resource consent process. Their responses are listed in Figures 6 to 9.

Statement One: *The resource consent process is time consuming*

Tourism-related businesses across the West Coast were asked to agree or disagree with Statement One. Their responses are illustrated in Figure 6.

Figure 6
Likert Scale: Resource Consent Process is Time Consuming

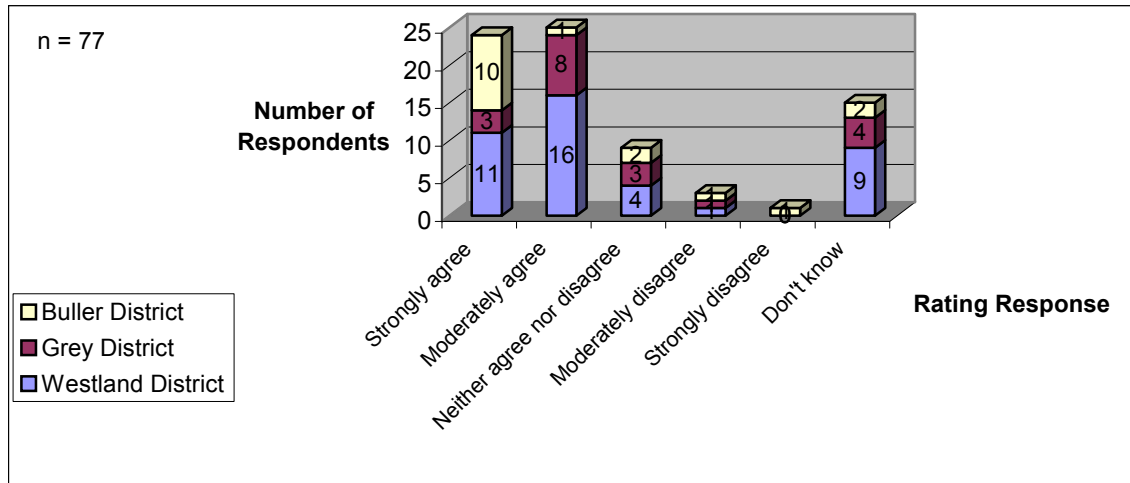


Some businesses recognised the time local government takes to process planning approvals is needed to ensure well thought decisions are made, although these respondents are a minority. A clear majority of tourism businesses on the West Coast perceive the resource consent process to be overly time consuming – 28 businesses (36%) ‘strongly agree’ and 28 businesses (36%) ‘moderately agree’. Businesses’ qualitative comments perceive the lengthy time frames for consents as involving an undue amount of ‘bureaucratic red tape’ and the lack of coordination within and between local authorities, which slows the approval process.

Statement Two: *The resource consent process is costly.*

Tourism-related business responses to Statement Two are shown in Figure 7.

Figure 7
Likert Scale: Resource Consent Process is Costly

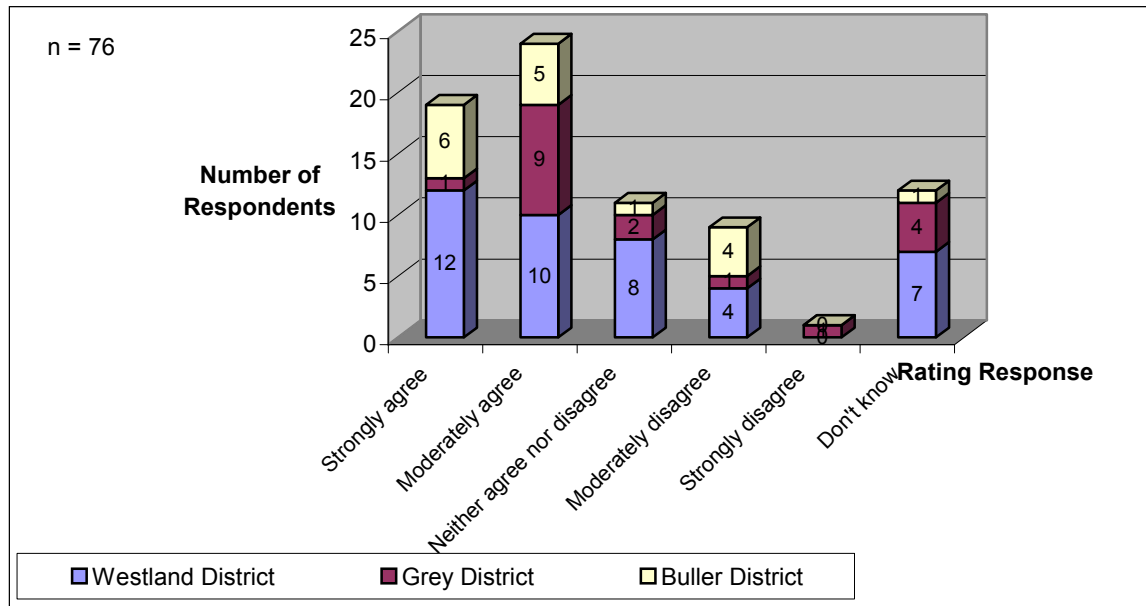


While a minority of operators acknowledged that approval procedures always incur some costs, a clear majority of businesses agree that the resource consent process is overly costly – 24 businesses (31%) ‘strongly agree’ and 25 businesses (32%) ‘moderately agree’. Respondent’s perceptions are based again on their perception of inefficient, ‘red tape’ procedures that can often incur unforeseen costs to developers, particularly when additional impact assessment or notification is required.

Statement Three: *The resource consent process limits property rights and has restricted the tourism industry's ability to develop.*

West Coast businesses' responses to Statement Three are shown in Figure 8.

Figure 8
Likert Scale: Restrictive Nature of Resource Consents

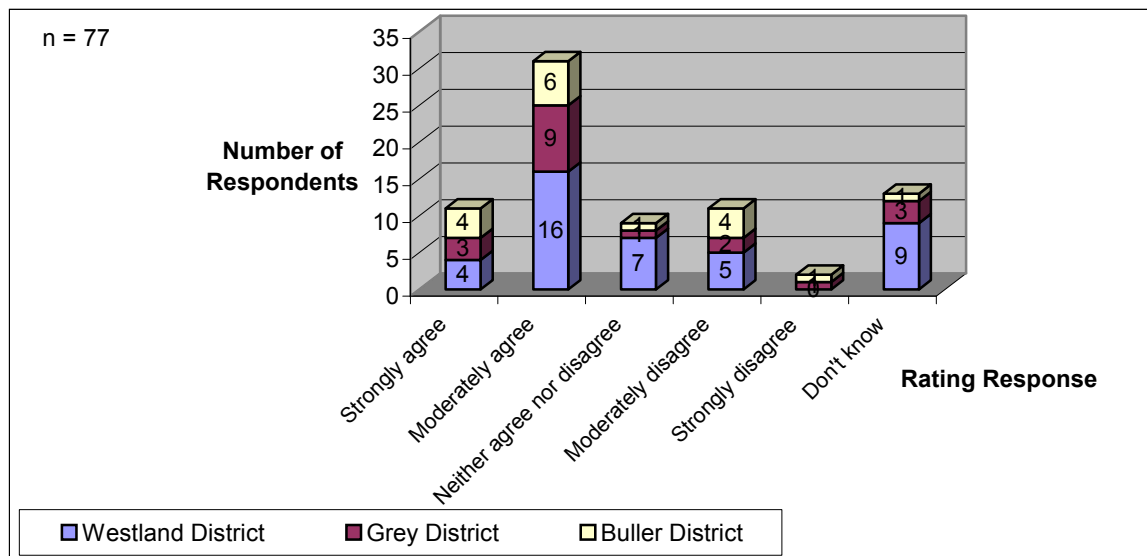


The majority of tourism businesses across the Coast perceive the resource consent process as an infringement on property rights that restricts the sector's ability to develop – 19 businesses (25%) 'strongly agree' and 24 businesses (32%) moderately agree'. Respondents attribute this perception to high developer costs, lengthy procedures and the rigorous consent conditions imposed by local government decision-makers on tourism development. However, 12 businesses (18%) of operators are unsure and 20 businesses (26%) disagree or hold a neutral position on whether resource consents have limited the sector's development activities. These respondents observe that consent processes ensure development does not adversely impact the surrounding biophysical and social environments as the well-being of both these assets is necessary to sustainable tourism development.

Statement Four: *The resource consent process allows too much public input to decision-making and has increased community conflict over tourism development.*

Businesses' responses to Statement Four are illustrated in Figure 9.

Figure 9
Likert Scale: Public Input into Resource Consent Process



Operators' responses are more wide ranging for Statement Four than Statements One, Two and Three, although the majority of business respondents agree or strongly agree (N=42) resource consents allow too much public input into decision-making and have increased community conflict over tourism development. Where respondents agree, they observe increased stakeholder input has allowed 'unreasonable' objections, such as objectors who lack a direct interest in the given development, to unduly hold up final planning approval at sometimes prohibitive costs to developers.

Where operators disagree with the statement, they perceive community input into decision-making as a positive aspect of the consent process that helps local stakeholders to ensure tourism development does not impact surrounding environs. This is seen to be in the interests of the tourism sector as many operators realise the well-being of local biophysical and social environments are essential assets to sustainable tourism development.

Three common themes can be seen to emerge from the above perceptions of the resource consent process:

- Local authorities' implementation of the resource consent process: Negative perceptions are based on concerns about the somewhat inconsistent, uncoordinated and over-regulated implementation of the process by councils. These factors can create undue costs and lengthy time delays in planning approval, which in turn can stifle development initiatives. However, respondents also recognise there will always be administrative procedures involved when applying for planning approval and that some costs time is required.
- Public input into consent decision-making: Negative perceptions include the ability for objectors with 'unreasonable' arguments, or with a limited stake in the development

activities, to unduly delay planning approval. These unreasonable, and often unforeseen, delays create additional costs to developers and can stifle development initiatives and activities. However, operators also see benefits from community and other stakeholders input as this can ensure tourism development is balanced and of a nature appropriate to the local area.

- Resource consent requirements for developers: Formal impact assessments and development conditions required under the consent process are often perceived negatively as overly rigorous, creating prohibitive costs and stifling development activities. While these requirements are seen to limit the tourism industry's ability to develop, they are alternatively perceived as necessary to prevent development that has adverse impacts on the natural environment and the character of local communities. The ability for consent conditions to protect local environs from unwanted development is recognised to be in the long-term interests of the tourism sector as it relies on a location's health and well-being to continue to attract visitors to these areas. The RMA has also ensured the tourism sector is more responsible and accountable to local communities for its development activities.

3.5 Regulation of the effects of development: Conclusion

The tourism industry on the West Coast perceives the RMA in both negative and positive terms. Negative perceptions focus on the RMA as a complex, 'user-unfriendly' statute that 'creates hassles' to limit tourism development. 'Hassles' include lengthy bureaucratic processes, resource consent and other process costs, and the ability for objectors to development to delay consent decisions.

Positive perceptions include how the Act has generally raised the standard of development. This can be attributed to the formal Assessment of Environmental Effects required before major developments can commence. The Act is also positively seen to have made industry more accountable to local communities for its activities. This observation can be attributed to the increased public input into local government decision-making, particularly during resource consent processes.

Overall, within New Zealand, the RMA and the resource consent process have not come into significant conflict with tourism development; no *cause celebre* has emerged at any level (Kearsley 1997:57). While a number of costs and problems have occurred, the RMA is generally accepted as the appropriate legislative vehicle for managing the effects associated with tourism, especially beyond conservation lands (TSG, 2001) (www.otsp.govt.nz).

Despite a few exceptions, based on responses from tourism-related businesses, similar conclusions can be made of the resource consent process on the West Coast. Respondents have both negative and positive views concerning different aspects of the resource consent process, which does not indicate major alterations to existing processes and policies are warranted. However, minor improvements could be made to local authorities' administration of resource consent procedures. These include improving coordination and consistency between councils, and within council departments, and during implementation of resource consent procedures.

3.6 Compliance with Development Regulation

As well as setting out conditions on development, such as resource consent conditions, local authorities are also empowered to ensure developers comply with regulations and standards. To ensure developers meet consent conditions and regulations, Council Planning and Compliance Officers monitor development activities, such as discharges into water, and report regulation and standard breaches to council authorities where they occur.

The administrative resources available to local authorities limit a council's ability to monitor and enforce consent and regulation compliance. As West Coast District Councils have few available resources and development activities are often isolated, compliance can be difficult to monitor and enforce (Hoggard, *pers comm.*, 2000).

3.7 The Provision of Utilities for Tourism

Utilities include water reticulation, sewerage, storm water, solid waste collection and disposal, roads and curbing, street lighting, street and information signs. (Ministry of Tourism, 1993b:5). They are core public services needed before tourism activities and development can occur without causing adverse environmental and social effects.

3.7.1 The Wider Context

In terms of sustainable tourism development, provision of adequate infrastructure is closely linked to the management of tourism's effects on local communities and the natural environment. Poorly maintained, inadequate public infrastructure can increase tourism's social and environmental impacts and stifle the potential for investment in tourism development. The Ministry of Tourism (1993b:5) states tourism development can also help utilise existing services more efficiently, provide employment growth and a wider rating base for better services.

Under the Local Government Act 1974, territorial authorities are the public sector agent with primary responsibility for providing core infrastructure within their districts. Although central government agencies may provide partial funding, local authorities rely mainly on ratepayer revenue and development levies to provide public infrastructure. Providing extra utilities for visitors and increased tourism development can create unwanted additional costs to local residents.

Territorial Authorities usually plan and fund utilities to meet local population demand. Demand for infrastructure can outstrip that which is usually required by residents when visitors are a significant proportion of the population, even if only temporarily. Seasonal visitor flows can stretch the capacity of utilities during peak season while leaving plant under-utilised for the remainder of the year (Ministry of Tourism, 1993).

3.7.2 The West Coast Situation³

As small, largely rural-based authorities, District Councils on the West Coast must work hard to provide adequate infrastructure to businesses and households in their constituencies. These

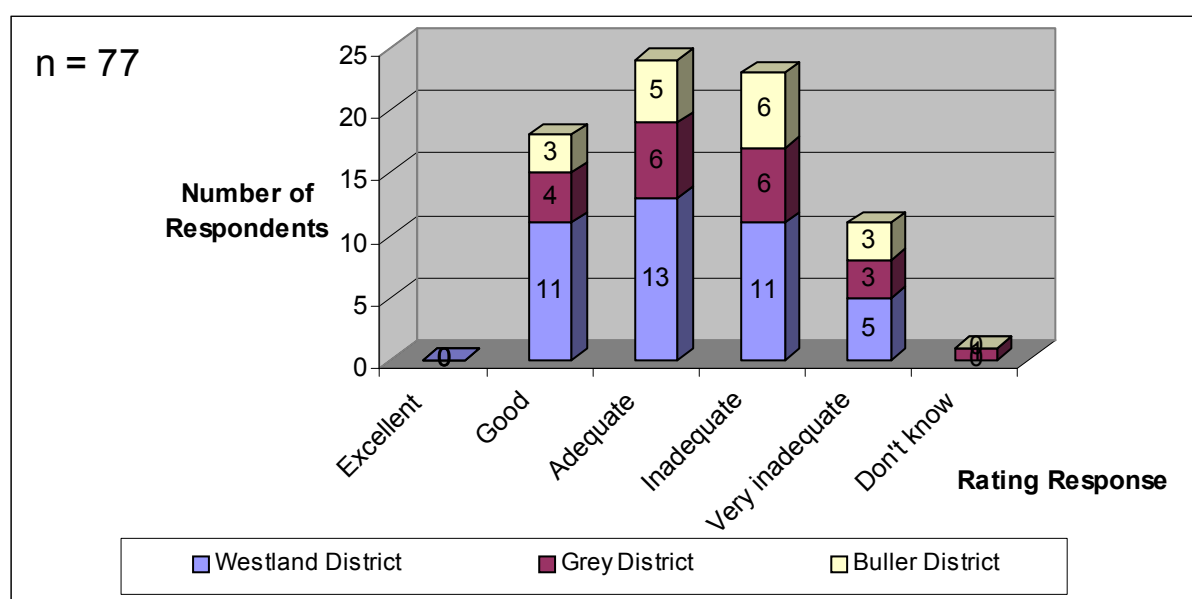
3 For a detailed assessment of utility provisions readers are directed to Report No 23 in this series (Dakers *et.al.*, 2001)

territorial authorities have limited revenue sources to provide utilities with only 21 per cent of the region classed as rateable land – the remainder is largely public conservation land (WCRC, 1996:4) that, conversely, acts to attract visitors to the Coast who create the need for additional utilities.

As many rural West Coast settlements are isolated, District Councils provide few utilities or services such as water supply or waste disposal to remote rural households and businesses. In this situation residents often provide their own infrastructure needs. Where new developments in the region require additional utilities, the developer often provides the large majority of these. Maintenance of existing infrastructure can also be difficult due to heavy rainfall, mountainous terrain and coastal erosion.

As territorial authorities are primarily responsible for managing tourism’s impacts through providing adequate utilities for visitors and development, tourism-related businesses were asked to assess their local Council’s current provision of infrastructure for tourism. Their responses are illustrated in Figure 10.

Figure 10
District Council Utilities for Tourism: Business Perspectives



The majority of tourism businesses across the Coast rated the District Council’s provision of utilities for tourism as ‘adequate’, n=36 (47%), while 20 respondents rated utilities as ‘inadequate’ (26%). Businesses in the Westland District were more likely to rate the provision of their utilities as ‘inadequate’ or ‘very inadequate’ than businesses in Grey and Buller.

During qualitative interviews, tourism-related NGOs across the region were also asked to assess District Councils’ current provision of infrastructure. Tourism-related businesses and NGOs gave similar qualitative reasons for their evaluation. In larger townships, such as Hokitika or Greymouth, most businesses and NGOs feel the District Council provides adequate infrastructure, especially considering the low ratepayer base all councils face. The smaller the settlement and the further it is from a major town, the less satisfied businesses and

NGOs are with their Council's provision of utilities for tourism. Many remote West Coast businesses provide their own entire infrastructure, including sewerage, water supply and waste disposal.

3.8 Utilities for tourism on the West Coast: Specific Concerns

During interviews with staff from the three District Councils, the West Coast Regional Council (WCRC) the regional tourism organisation, tourism-related businesses and NGOs, four main concerns over utilities for sustainable tourism development arose. Forty per cent of businesses had raised concerns with their local District Council and all NGOs interviewed in Westland had raised concerns over utilities for tourism with the Westland District Council, mainly concerning facilities needed for solid waste disposal. Fewer tourism-related NGOs in Greymouth and Buller had raised utility concerns with their respective District Council. The main issues raised were:

- The lack of adequate solid waste disposal facilities.
- The lack of adequate sewage disposal facilities.
- The need for additional signage throughout the region.
- The need for a strategic plan outlining council plans for additional tourism utilities.

3.8.1 Inadequate facilities for solid waste disposal

Visitors to a district create additional refuse and this, in turn, creates increased pressure on local waste disposal systems. Conversely, inadequate waste disposal detracts from the quality of a visitor's experience. One of the key concerns West Coast District and Regional Councils currently face, is a lack of adequate solid waste disposal facilities.

In 1989, the WCRC found the Region's 32 refuse sites were substandard and several larger sites are full (WCRC Regional Policy Statement, 2000: 94). Twenty four per cent of business respondents stated current solid waste disposal was poor to very inadequate within their District, as District Councils do not provide rubbish collection to remote tourism businesses, many of who dispose of their own solid waste.

Plate 1

The Fox Glacier Refuse Site is full and a new facility for solid waste disposal is needed.



Photo taken: Dec 2000

The resource consents for many of these refuse sites are due to expire and the WCRC with the District Council's are currently looking at alternative options for rubbish disposal and increased recycling. However, the Region's low and scattered population poses waste management challenges (WCRC Regional Policy Statement, 2000:95) and plans for additional solid waste disposal facilities have not yet been formalised (Simpson, *pers comm.*, 2000).

3.8.2 Inadequate facilities for sewage disposal

Inadequate sewage treatment and disposal can detrimentally affect visitors' experience. Fifteen per cent of business respondents, all from the Grey and Buller Districts stated inadequate sewerage utilities were a concern in terms of continuing to attract visitors to their areas. Additional visitor numbers also increase pressure on sewerage facilities and the WCRC and the Grey and Buller District Councils are faced with concerns about inadequate sewage treatment facilities in a number of areas that are popular tourist destinations. This is particularly evident in smaller, rural townships and more remote sites.

Facilities for freedom campers' effluent and solid waste are needed to protect public and visitor health and water quality standards. Currently, *giardiasis* on the Coast is almost twice the national rate and infection rates are increasing (Ministry of Health, website, Nov/Dec 2000). Several respondents have voiced concern over this issue. This problem indicates a failure in the existing environmental management systems of local and central government agencies in the region.

3.8.3 Lack of signage

Twenty four per cent of tourism businesses raised concerns over a lack of signage in their region, citing instances when visitors were unable to find amenities, such as the local Visitor Information Centres. Taylor (1997) found a lack of adequate road signs to be a major

problem to West Coast visitors. Poor signage can cause confusion and travel delays for visitors, lowering the quality of their experience.

In addition to a lack of signs, businesses raised concerns over the Westland District Council's policy to standardise all tourism-related signage using brown Transit signs that indicate attraction type and do not name specific businesses.

Plate 2

An example of the generic Transit NZ sign and one privately owned.



Strong business opposition has been directed at the Westland District Council's policy, as signs attract customers and are a key component of business strategy. Some businesses have threatened to leave the region if required to change or remove their signs.

3.8.4 The lack of planning for tourism utilities

Overall, District Council utilities provide a barely adequate service for current levels of tourism development and residents on the West Coast, although there are exceptions, particularly in popular, rural tourist destinations. This standard of service is likely to deteriorate, however, if tourism development and visitor numbers in the region increase.

Most businesses across the Coast believe the District Councils should spend more money on infrastructure for tourism, especially in areas that lack adequate waste disposal facilities. More spending on tourism infrastructure is also seen to benefit residents. The utilities respondents noted as most needed are shown in Table 3.

Table 3
Business Perceptions¹ of Increased Utility Spending

West Coast District	Signage	Solid Waste Disposal	Infrastructure Strategic Plan	Sewerage	Water	Street Lighting
Westland	6	7	5	0	2	3
Grey	4	2	3	5	3	0
Buller	4	2	2	4	3	0
% of Respondent Type	25%	20%	18%	16%	15%	5%

Note: 1. n = 77

District Councils plan for utility provision through the annual planning process (Simpson, *pers comm.*, 2000). This process was criticised by tourism-related businesses and NGOs as *ad hoc* and reactive to tourism's needs. As noted elsewhere a number of tourism-related businesses across the region stated the lack of District Council strategic plans for utilities was an impediment to tourism development.

3.9 Provision of Utilities for Tourism: Conclusion

The role the three District Councils on the West Coast play in providing utilities for visitors and tourism development is to mitigate the potentially adverse social and environmental impacts from tourism activities. Overall, infrastructure standards for tourism on the Coast are businesses as barely adequate although the quality of service varies, particularly in popular remote areas. Any seen by increase in visitor numbers may place unsustainable pressure on existing facilities.

However, currently on the West Coast and throughout New Zealand, no mechanism exists for businesses to signal territorial authorities their future infrastructure requirements (PCE, 1997:40). There is also a lack of quantified, reliable data about the impacts on, and requirements of, tourism on District utilities. Respondents felt a strategy outlining the future utilities District Council intend to build would allow some indication of the services in an area, which helps private investors assess the potential for investment.

To plan strategically for building additional utilities, District Councils need to assess existing infrastructure capacity and pinpoint where gaps currently exist and where gaps could occur in future. This requires monitoring tourism trends and the quality of existing utility services, such as drinking and recreational water quality.

The need for additional capacity of core utilities, such as sewage and waste disposal, is likely to increase as visitor numbers grow. This is particularly a concern in more popular, remote areas and District Councils need to prioritise where and when upgrades occur. Careful infrastructure management is required as without adequate utilities, tourism has the potential

to degrade standards in local communities and the natural environment, which in turn, may result in tourists no longer wanting to visit the region.

Key aspects to emerge from the business data, and interviews of NGOs and local government officials are:

- Lack of quantified, reliable data about visitor trends as well as the impacts on and requirements of tourism on District utilities.
- Lack of strategic plan for managing social and environmental impacts if visitor numbers grow.
- Little impetus to plan for sustainable tourism development as tourism activity is perceived as not yet affecting local communities or the natural environment in many parts of the West Coast.
- Lack of solid waste and sewage disposal facilities for visitors.
- Lack of signage across the region.

3.10 Enabling Tourism vs Managing Tourism's Impacts

As the previous chapter and the above material have shown, local authorities have dual functions that can be broadly categorised as the 'enablement' of tourism, and 'management of tourism's impacts'. The former sees Councils encouraging and supporting tourism development and private investment in the sector through economic development initiatives, event tourism and council amenities. However, the latter sees Councils controlling and restricting tourism development so that the sector does not adversely affect local communities and the natural environment.

Several authors state these dual functions can create a conflict of interest for local authorities over what level and type of development to allow (Parkinson, 1997; PCE, 1997; Kearsley, 1997). While local authorities use tourism to realise economic opportunities to their region, for tourism development to be sustainable Councils must also seek to mitigate adverse effects from tourism growth by controlling tourism activities and development that are inappropriate to the surrounding biophysical and social environs.

One criticism of local authorities in New Zealand is that District Plan standards for development are too permissive, and that they encourage economic development at the expense of ensuring environmental and social quality (Parkinson, 1997:48). For example, the Westland District Council is reputed to have 'relaxed' District Plan development standards and is more permissive of development than other local authorities in NZ (Elliott, *pers comm.*, 2000).

This attitude may reflect increased concern of local authorities for economic opportunities on the West Coast, as public and private restructuring over the past 15-odd years has downsized rural economies. The Coast's three primary industries, agriculture, mining and forestry, have all suffered cut backs over the last decade and as the public conservation estate makes up over 80 per cent of the Coast, room for development expansion is limited.

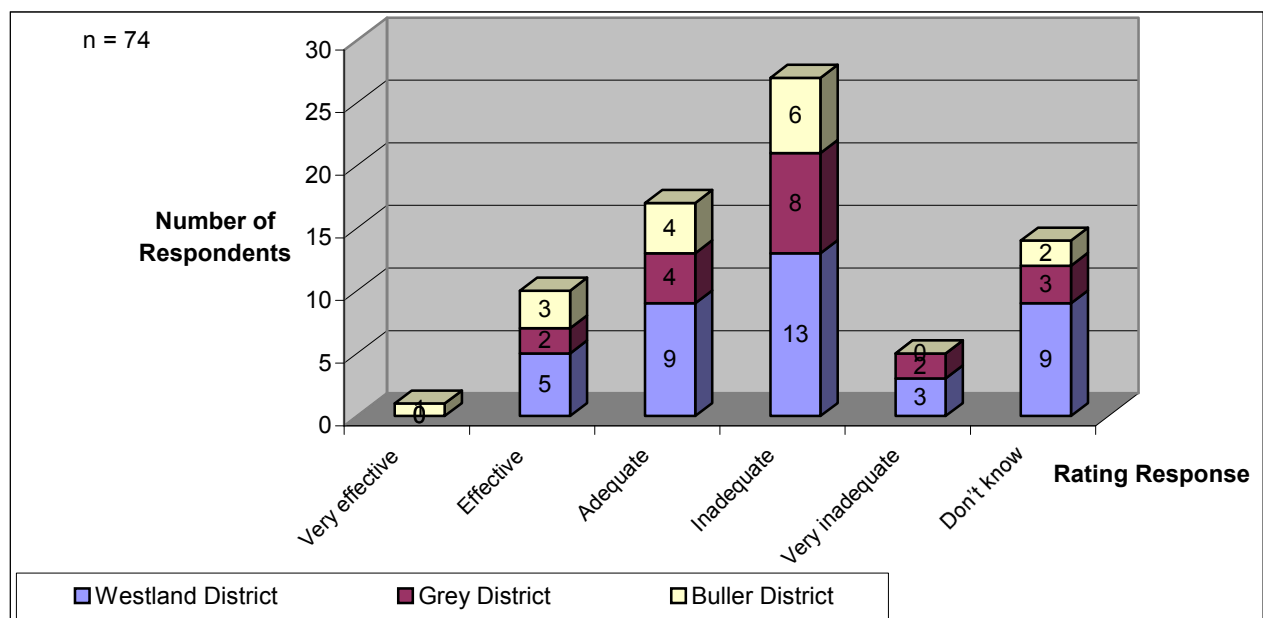
Another factor providing impetus for local government to promote economic development on the West Coast is the timber accord, a compensation package awarded by central government in exchange for lost native logging rights throughout the region. Of the total \$120 million package, Buller, Grey and Westland District Councils and the West Coast Regional Council have taken \$7 million apiece. The three District Councils have part of their fund aside for capital development and the remainder to support economic development initiatives in their respective Districts.

While this conflict of interest is real for tourism management by territorial authorities, in many ways it is no different from concerns that arise over other management roles. Many local authorities have devolved their promotional tasks to Regional Tourism Organisations, which has lessened this conflict of interest (Kearsley, 1997:55; PCE, 1997), or at least put it at arms length.

The division of economic development and regulatory functions within the local authority itself also acts to mitigate this conflict of interest. Most District Councils have separated economic development initiatives from regulatory responsibilities. While this separation of functions raises other concerns in terms of strategic tourism planning and creating extra 'red tape' for developers, it also enables checks and balances within Council itself.

Across the West Coast, tourism-related businesses were asked to assess how effectively their District Council managed this conflict of interest and whether the development allowed was generally appropriate to the location. Business responses are illustrated in Figure 11.

Figure 11
How Effectively Does the District Council Manage its Conflicting Interests? Business Perspectives



Operators' responses did not differ significantly between Districts, with 27 (36%) of all business respondents rating their District Council's management of its conflict of interest as 'inadequate' and 5 (6%) as 'very inadequate'. Seventeen (23%) rated Council's conflict of interest management as 'adequate' and 13 (17%) did not know how District Councils handled this issue.

Chapter 4

Role of the Regional Organisations

4.1 Introduction

The following chapter discusses the responsibilities and functions at the regional level. Stakeholder assessment is provided for the West Coast Regional Council (WCRC), who also draw their mandate from the Resource Management Act (RMA), and Tourism West Coast (TWC), the regional tourism organisation which acts as the coordinator and representative of the tourism industry on the Coast.

4.2 Regional Council Functions and Responsibilities for Tourism Management

Under the *Local Government Act 1974*, the roles Regional Councils can play within tourism planning and management are limited to what District Councils within their jurisdiction permit.

Until approximately four years ago, the WCRC played an active policy advice and monitoring role in tourism, based on recognition that the sector is growing across the region. The Council collected a tourism rate from ratepayers and the commercial sector on behalf of the Regional Tourism Organisation, Tourism West Coast. However, ratepayer opposition to paying this rate and reluctance to support the Regional Council's tourism activities, seen by residents as 'subsidising' the tourism sector, caused the WCRC to stop collecting a universal tourism rate and withdraw from management of the industry (Narayan, *pers comm.*, 2000).

Currently, the District Councils collect only a commercial rate from tourism businesses used to fund the Regional Tourism Organisation. Although District Councils do monitor basic tourism trends, such as visitor counts estimated through visitor centres inquiries and compliance checks on development, no public or private sector agency took over the WCRC's monitoring programme. Consequently, there is a lack of comprehensive data available regarding tourism on the West Coast.

To date, although the regional council recognises the importance of sustainable tourism to the Coast (Regional Policy Statement, 2000), it has very little direct involvement in tourism management. District Councils, reflecting ratepayer opinion, do not support the WCRC having specific tourism management functions.

In the New Zealand context, there is little direction to suggest an appropriate role for Regional Councils in terms of sustainable tourism development and Regional Councils generally have little direct involvement in tourism planning (PCE, 1997).

However, under the RMA, Regional Councils have an *indirect* influence on sustainable tourism development through Regional Policy Statements and plans on air, water and soil quality and coastal activities. According to legislation, Regional Councils' indirect tourism-related functions include:

- Formulation and implementation of regional environmental plans and policy statements under the RMA where these provisions regulate tourism development, such as discharges to water.
- Administration of the resource consent process, particularly monitoring the consent compliance of tourism-related developments.
- State of the environment monitoring to ensure environmental standards are being met across the region, such as ensuring drinking and recreational water quality.
- Flood management, for example several accommodation providers at Franz are at risk from the Waiho river flooding (Naryan, *pers. comm.*, 2000, Davies, *pers. comm.*, 2001).
- The provision of public transport systems.

Plate 3

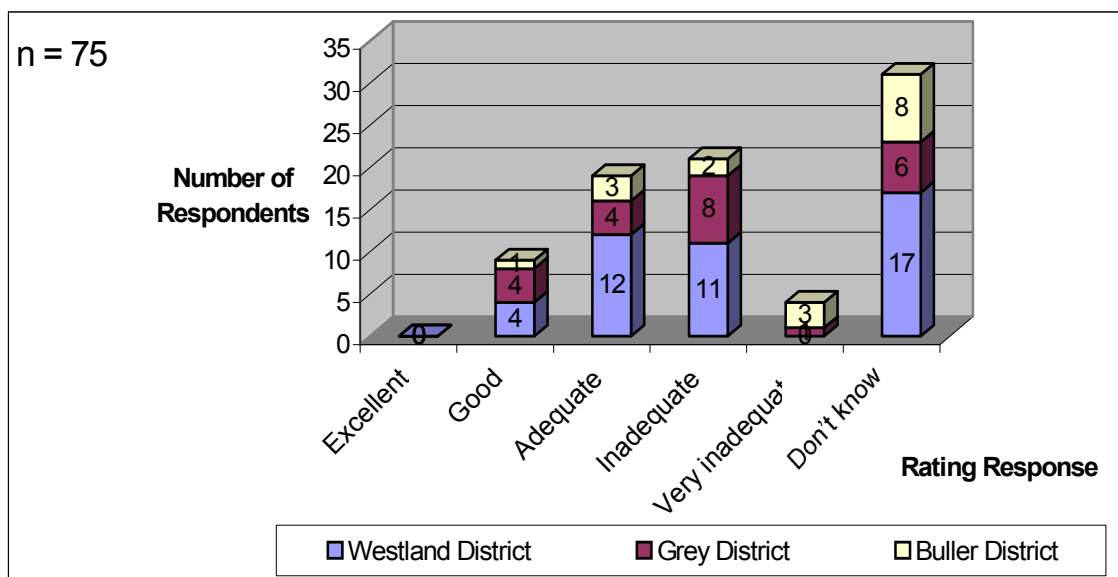
The Waiho River, near Franz Josef, is one area where the WCRC undertakes flood management



4.3 The Current Situation

Tourism-related businesses on the West Coast were asked to assess the WCRC's management of tourism's effects on the natural environment. Their responses are illustrated in Figure 12.

Figure 12
Business Rating of WCRC Management of Tourism's Environmental Impacts



The majority of business respondents, n = 28 (37%), do not know how effectively the WCRC is managing tourism's environmental impacts. Operators who are unaware of the Regional Council's environmental management activities explained that they 'never see the WCRC', believed that DoC is mainly responsible for environmental management across the West Coast, or did not know of any environmental problems either visitors or tourism development had caused.

Where operators were aware of the WCRC's environmental management of tourism, most rated the Regional Council's efforts as 'adequate' (n=17) (23%) to 'inadequate' (n=18) (24%). These respondents' main reasons included the current lack of adequate solid waste refuse sites and concerns over the lack of dump stations for freedom camper waste. Several respondents also queried the need for a Regional Council as well as District Councils and perceived the WCRC's conditions imposed on development to protect the natural environment as 'too strict' and bureaucratic.

NGOs were also asked to assess the WCRC's management of tourism's environmental impacts. The majority of NGOs were not aware of the environmental management functions the regional council had in terms of tourism. Where NGOs did assess the WCRC, most NGOs rated the Councils environmental management of tourism as 'adequate' to 'inadequate'. NGO respondents' qualitative comments reasons were similar to those given by operators, and included the lack of adequate solid waste refuse sites and the lack of facilities for freedom camper dumping.

CASE STUDY OF REGIONAL ORGANISATIONS: Freedom Camper Dumping on the West Coast

On the West Coast, the most direct role the regional council has in tourism planning and management occurs through its Regional Policy Statement on Solid and Hazardous Waste (2000: 94-95). Currently, freedom camper dumping is causing visual pollution and health concerns across the Coast and each District Council has provisions for dealing with freedom camper dumping. However, as various District provisions differ from 'by-laws that prohibit all camping' to guidelines that allow camping unless complaints are laid, they can produce outcomes in one District that act to contradict regulations in another.

The WCRC is seen as the appropriate coordinator of management efforts to ensure this waste is properly disposed, as its Regional Policy Statement on Solid and Hazardous Waste covers this concern (Kennedy, *pers comm.*, 2000; Simpson, *pers comm.*, 2000). The WCRC's Solid Waste Policy (2000: 95):

1. Emphasises the importance of signage that indicate dumping facilities through use of standard Transit New Zealand markers.
2. Advocates education for freedom campers through the New Zealand Environmental Care Code, especially for those with no access to toilet facilities.
3. Encourages consultation with Transit New Zealand, DoC and District Councils to further develop public toilet facilities.
4. Urges District Councils to request camping ground operators provide dumping facilities and states that the WCRC will work with any agency to provide additional facilities, including DoC, Transit New Zealand, camping grounds and campervan/caravan manufacturers.

Approximately two years ago, the WCRC, Tourism West Coast, Westland District Council, NZ Freedom Campers Association, DoC and the Health Protection Officer held a meeting to initiate efforts for addressing freedom camper dumping. This initial meeting found there was a lack of substantive information regarding effluent dumping occurrences, so it was decided to collect the required information. However, no further action has been taken since (Health Protection Officer, *pers comm.*, 2000).

With growing visitor numbers to the West Coast, dumping and incidences of giardiasis are increasing (Health Protection Officer, *pers comm.*, 2000; National Health Report, Dec/Jan 2000, website), despite the growing number of camping grounds providing this facility and education of travellers by the tourist industry and other organisations (WCRC, 2000:94). This is likely to spark greater efforts from local and regional government across the region to increase management efforts to mitigate this problem, particularly in areas where businesses and households are reliant on surface water for potable supplies.

District Council staff feel the WCRC should direct and coordinate any further attempts to mitigate the problem as it is covered under the Regional Policy Statement (Kennedy, *pers comm.*, 2000; Simpson, *pers comm.*, 2000). As dumping occurs within the jurisdiction of all three District Councils, coordination is needed during policy formulation and operation. Any further attempts to manage this problem should also provide for input from DoC and Transit New Zealand, as well as the tourism industry as the private sector currently provides most dump stations and manufacture and service campervans/caravans.

4.4 Tourism West Coast

Tourism West Coast is the West Coast's Regional Tourism Organisation (RTO), which aims to co-ordinate promotion of the region.

4.4.1 Functions and Responsibilities for Tourism Management

When Regional Tourism Organisations (RTOs) were established in the late 1980s to promote and market regions, they operated closely with territorial authorities. Many RTOs had broad ranging responsibilities and widely representative management boards, which took a great deal of direction from their local authority. Recently, 'free market' influences have seen RTOs restructured into smaller, more professional boards that tend to be independent of, but still accountable to, local authorities and chaired by acknowledged leaders from tourism and other industries (Kearsley, 1997: 55).

Generally, the RTOs' role is one of regional promotion to attract international and domestic visitors. RTOs' primarily produce information material, such as promotional brochures or websites. They operate on two levels; first, by liaising and forming alliances with tourism-related organisations outside the region, such as the New Zealand Tourism Board, industry gatherings like TRENZ or marketing alliances such as the South Island Marketing Alliance. Second, RTOs also coordinate promotion within the region, by liaising with and organising marketing efforts of area industry associations, such as the Inangahua Promotions Association.

4.4.2 The Current Situation

Tourism West Coast is one of New Zealand's twenty-six RTOs and is managed by a seven member board – two members are appointed by each District Council and these six members then elect one representative from the tourism industry. Funding comes from the three District Councils who each contribute \$50,000 per annum from rate collection. Tourism operators can also pay a voluntary annual membership fee or contribute toward specific promotions, such as local area brochures. Two full-time staff are employed, a Chief Executive Officer and a Marketing Executive with a part-time administrator.

Tourism West Coast's mission statement is to:

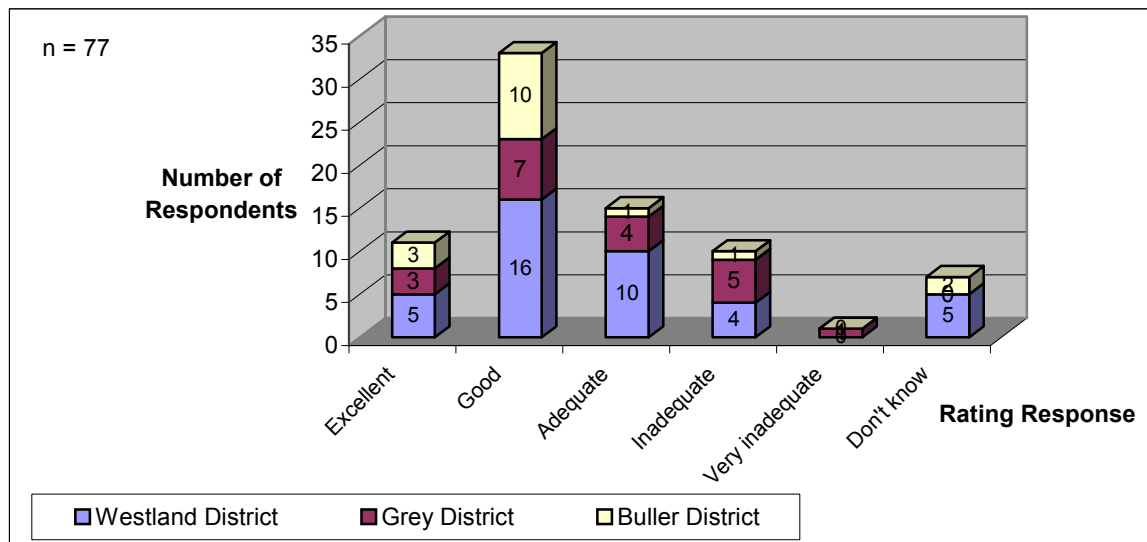
- Provide a regional profile that will enhance the West Coast economy through increased business and employment opportunities from increased visitor spend, domestic visitor nights and average length of stay.
- Foster cooperation between tourist and related operators.
- Promote an understanding of tourism's benefits to West Coast residents and local government.
- Encourage the development of quality tourism product appropriate to the West Coast.
- Promote the principles and benefits of sustainability accruing from a quality West Coast experience (Tourism West Coast, 2000b).

As the second to least funded RTO with the fifth biggest jurisdictional area in New Zealand, Tourism West Coast struggles to meet its overall aim of promoting the region and the objectives of its mission statement (Wilson, *pers comm.*, 2000). While the mission statement

recognises the importance of sustainability, a definition or quantified objectives for sustainable tourism development are not specified for the West Coast region.

Tourism-related businesses across the West Coast were asked to assess the current regional promotion and marketing by Tourism West Coast. Their responses are illustrated in Figure 13.

Figure 13
Promotion by Regional Tourism Organisation: Business Perspectives



Thirty-three business respondents (43 %) rated Tourism West Coast's regional promotion as 'good', and 11 (14%) as excellent. Ratings also varied somewhat between districts, with ten operators in Buller giving a rating of 'good' (59%), compared with 16 operators in Westland (40%) and seven in Grey (35%). Only 11 respondents thought promotion was 'inadequate' (13%) or 'very inadequate' (1%), and seven businesses (9%) did not know what the RTO did.

During qualitative interviews, NGOs within the region were also asked for responses regarding Tourism West Coast's promotion and marketing of the region. Business and NGO respondents' comments include:

- 'No problems'; the RTO is doing a 'great job', especially considering the resources available.
- The RTO could liaise and consult more with industry and other stakeholders within the region.
- Tourism West Coast needs more resources as they have a large area to cover and sector is growing.
- The RTO needs to develop a development strategy for the sector based on increased research and knowledge of tourism trends in the region.

Six business respondents (81%) questioned the ability of the RTO's District Council-led management board to strategically plan for tourism. This criticism has arisen from mainly larger businesses due to the perception that current board representatives, who are largely from outside the sector, lack sufficient knowledge of tourism to direct the RTO's policy

formulation and operation effectively. This criticism raises questions over what are the appropriate roles for local government and industry in terms of administering an RTO.

Tourism West Coast representatives currently consult with a variety of tourism stakeholders, both inside and outside the region. Industry members are requested to evaluate the RTO's efforts and make recommendations for future improvement. Where possible, these recommendations are incorporated into Tourism West Coast's annual performance agreement, which is then ratified by each District Council. The RTO may attend community meetings where necessary as well as nationally-based industry and trade fairs, such as TRENZ (Wilson, *pers comm.*, 2000).

This input from District Councils, regional industry members, and national stakeholders helps monitor the RTO's performance to ensure the RTO is meeting its aims and stakeholder expectations. However, the limited resources available to Tourism West Coast restricts their ability to ensure a wide range of stakeholders have input during the formulation of its annual promotional plans. Limited resources also restrict Tourism West Coast's ability to monitor regional tourism trends and tourism's impacts on local communities. Currently, the RTO relies on rudimentary research and monitoring undertaken by other agencies, such as visitor counts by District Councils based on the number of visitor information centre inquiries (Wilson, *pers comm.*, 2000).

Tourism West Coast has recognised the need for a strategic five to ten year plan to promote sustainable tourism in the region, for example, by dispersing visitors from current attraction 'hotspots' to less popular areas. While this type of strategic planning is within Tourism West Coast's existing mandate, the RTO currently lacks the capacity to develop a broad strategy for sustainable tourism development. The RTO lacks reliable tourism-related information as well as the financial resources needed to acquire planning expertise. Consequently, Tourism West Coast has not yet developed a strategic plan. However, the RTO does recognise that as visitor numbers and tourism activities increase throughout the region, the need for clear objectives and direction for the sector's development will become more pressing (Wilson, *pers comm.*, 2000). The RTO has recently commissioned research into tourism trends across the region, and this will assist Tourism West Coast to formulate a strategic tourism plan.

Chapter 5

Local Government Monitoring of Tourism

5.1 Introduction

An important role of the public sector is to monitor tourism activities and development to secure a reliable source of information. This information can then be used to develop strategies and plans for sustainable tourism development. Government agencies may research and monitor a wide range of tourism-related activities and developments, including the industry's multiplier effects on employment and income, social and biophysical impacts, visitor trends and demand, the effect of land-use and transport planning on the sector, projections for infrastructure capacity and so forth (World Tourism Organisation, 1993; Elliott, 1997). Information gathered can be fed back into planning and decision-making processes so that tourism strategies and plans can be adapted to meet the evolving needs and expectations of industry, visitors and host communities, (World Tourism Organisation, 1993; Nelson, 1993; PCE, 1997; Elliot, 1997).

Several central government agencies monitor tourism activities and development. For example, the Tourism New Zealand's International Visitor Survey records the number and nationality of overseas visitors and estimates the economic benefits to New Zealand (Tourism New Zealand, Feb 2001, TNZ website). The Department of Conservation monitors trends, including visitor numbers at key sites around the country to establish whether sites need to be 'hardened' through additional infrastructure (Comber, *pers comm.*, 2001.). If reliable at the regional level, the information collected by central government agencies can also be used by local government to develop tourism related plans and strategies. As tourism activities and impacts are most palpable at the local level, Territorial Local Authorities, Regional Councils and Regional Tourism Organisations need to gather information that can be used to develop strategies for sustainable tourism development.

As part of their function of enabling tourism, *Territorial Local Authorities* are likely to monitor how effectively their efforts are increasing visitor numbers and tourism development in their region. Findings can be used to assess whether council's investment in projects that enable tourism are likely to bring viable returns to the community and local economy. For example, Wellington City Council's feasibility study into whether to support the Mobil Nissan Car Rally was based on their calculations of visitor spending and increased District profile that were estimated from previous data gathered (Fry, 1993).

Section 35 of *The Resource Management Act 1991* (RMA) places responsibilities on local government to monitor the effectiveness and implementation of its district plans and regional policies and the 'state of the [local] environment'. Under Section 35 of the RMA, Territorial Local Authorities are also required to monitor whether developments are complying with their resource consent conditions. Monitoring development activities is part of the role District Councils play to manage tourism's social and environmental impacts, as councils ensure developments are meeting standards set by the community under District Plans. However, local authorities, particularly smaller authorities, often lack the resources to comprehensively monitor developments (Hoggard, *pers comm.* 2000; Parkinson 1977).

Regional Councils are most likely to monitor the biophysical impacts from tourism activities on the natural environment with their mandate, under the RMA, to ensure the sustainable management of the region's natural resources. Regional Councils are more likely to restrict development that is likely to have adverse environmental impacts, compared with the restrictions local authorities put in place as, under the RMA, Regional Councils focus more specifically on the sustainable management of resources and environmental quality (Sinclair, *pers comm.* 2001). Their compliance monitoring is typically more comprehensive than local authorities.

Regional Tourism Organisations (RTO) are not legally required to monitor tourism activity. However, most RTOs monitor how satisfied industry members are with regional marketing and promotion. It is in RTO's best interests to monitor their marketing and promotional efforts, as the data gathered can be used to assess whether investments aiming to increase visitor numbers and enabling tourism development are as effective and efficient as possible. Where monitoring reveals concerns, the RTO's management efforts can be adapted and data gathered can be used to set the RTO's performance contracts for the subsequent year. Generally they do not have specific requirements for any planning or environmental monitoring or management.

5.2 The Current Situation in New Zealand

Despite the obvious benefits of research and the obligation to monitor environmental effects, territorial authorities' involvement in comprehensive or integrated tourism planning is limited. In a survey of TLAs, Parkinson (1997) found 87 per cent of local authorities within New Zealand monitor tourist numbers, however only rudimentary measures are often used, such as counts at visitor centre and key attractions. Only 35 per cent of Councils monitor community acceptance of tourism on a regular basis (*ibid*:30). Despite recognised importance of quality utility services, 52 per cent of Councils do not monitor tourism's impacts on these services. Tourism's impacts on public toilet provision is most common, followed by impacts on car parking while monitoring of impacts on water services and rubbish collection is the least common (*ibid*:34). Dymond (1996) found similar results: less than half local authorities measure visitor satisfaction or quantify tourism's economic contribution, and under one fifth measure indicators of tourism's ecological impact. Often, estimates of economic multiplier effects are crudely factored up by Tourism New Zealand's estimates of daily spending per market sector and, similarly, ecological monitoring is often measured indirectly or by referring the task to DoC (Kearsley, 1997:55-56).

In 1995, the World Tourism Organisation produced a list of indicators that measure how effectively regional government promotes sustainable tourism development. Using this list, Dymond (1996) found that Regional Councils value indicators that reflect ecological and built environment activity, and regard ecosystem stability and waste management as their preferred indicators. Territorial authorities and RTOs value economic indicators and those that measure local resident satisfaction. Conversely, Regional Councils least valued indicators that measure social impacts, local and consumer satisfaction and tourism's economic contribution, while District Councils and RTO's gave lower ratings to site protection and planning review indicators. Regional Council's emphasis on environmental indicators, and Territorial Authorities' on socio-economic indicators, shows the different levels of local government have defined their separate roles in terms of monitoring tourism activities and development (Kearsley, 1997:56). Dymond's study suggests a possible

fragmentation of local government roles for tourism monitoring and may prevent the exchange of information between local government agencies that is likely, in turn, to limit local government's ability to effectively, efficiently develop and adapt strategies and plans for sustainable tourism development.

5.2.1 The Current Situation on the West Coast

District Councils on the West Coast undertake only rudimentary tourism-related monitoring. With a small population size, West Coast District Councils lack substantial resources to implement regular programmes for monitoring of tourism. However, local authorities in the region do undertake some tourism-related monitoring and research, including:

- Resource consent compliance checks on developments to ensure environmental standards are being met.
- Visitor counts through recording number of queries at visitor information centres.
- Logs that check planning application processes are completed within legal time frames.
- Regular checks of drinking water quality.

The council-funded RTO, Tourism West Coast, does not monitor any tourism activity currently, although proposals to begin monitoring have been included in a tourism strategy being developed at present (Wilson, *pers comm.*, 2000).

Before 1997, the West Coast Regional Council (WCRC) was involved in tourism-related monitoring. However, ratepayer opposition founded on reluctance to 'subsidise the tourism industry' has caused the WCRC to cease all tourism-related activity, including monitoring. Currently, the WCRC only undertakes the monitoring legally required under the RMA. As the WCRC's monitoring programmes focus on the biophysical effects caused by development, information the WCRC gathers is of particular use to development of tourism in the region, which is reliant on maintaining a 'clean, green' environment. Relevant information the WCRC gathers through its monitoring programmes includes:

- Resource consent compliance checks on developments to ensure environmental standards are being met, and;
- Regular checks of drinking and recreational water quality (Narayan, *pers comm.*, 2000).

Tourism-related businesses and NGOs are those most directly affected by the growth of visitor numbers to the Region and, through their involvement with the industry, these tourism stakeholders also experience the effects of local government's tourism planning and management. This study aimed to examine the perspectives West Coast tourism stakeholders hold regarding the emerging roles and functions of local government in promoting sustainable tourism development. 'Tourism stakeholders' includes tourism-related businesses and NGOs as well as local government staff.

In terms of economic development, the tourism sector provides significant opportunities within the West Coast region. However, as an industry with the potential for significant adverse social and environmental impacts within the Region, the sector requires some form of local government management and guidance in order to ensure tourism development is advanced in a sustainable manner.

Chapter 6

Discussion

6.1 Introduction

The tourism sector provides significant opportunities for economic development within the West Coast region. However, as an industry with the potential for significant social and environmental impacts within the Region, the sector requires guidance from, and management by, local government in order to ensure tourism development is advanced in a sustainable manner. This study aimed to examine perspectives about the evolving roles and functions of local government in promoting sustainable tourism development that tourism-related businesses, NGOs and local government staff within the Region currently hold. This final section discusses the implications of the study's findings for local government authorities.

6.2 The evolving role of local government in tourism planning

As part of the functions of local government, the role of elected members and officers is to translate the principles of sustainable tourism development into action. On the West Coast, District Councils play the most important role in enabling and planning for tourism development, as many existing local authority functions affect the industry's activities and tourism activities and impacts typically occur at the local or site level. The role of the RTO, Tourism West Coast, is primarily to increase visitor numbers and boost development of the industry. The West Coast Regional Council plays an indirect role in tourism management that mainly involves environmental regulation and monitoring.

6.2.1 Enablement of tourism: local government functions

At present in New Zealand, District Councils are left to determine what their 'appropriate' role in enabling tourism will be (Harland, 1993:106), and local authorities can play an important role in supporting and encouraging sustainable tourism development. On the West Coast, however, the extent of District Councils' participation is constrained by their lack of resources. In addition, territorial local authorities face high costs when providing amenities and attractions within their Districts, and Council staff see the need to service local communities' needs before those of visitors.

District Council staff throughout the Region do not believe leading or directing private investment in tourism is an appropriate role for local authorities, and are reluctant for local authorities to substantially increase investment in the area. Rather, District Council staff see local authorities' role to be more facilitative of private sector development, mainly through economic development strategies and financial support for business initiatives.

Another factor influencing the extent of District Council's tourism 'enablement' is the level of visitor numbers and the extent of existing tourism development and activities. The Westland District Council's greater level of involvement in the sector reflects higher visitor flows and tourism activity in the Westland District than the Grey and Buller Districts. This

illustrates that the greater the level of returns the sector brings to the community, the more willing local authorities are to enable tourism development. The question of whether to invest in developing the industry to attract more visitors or wait until the visitors arrive and then provide more services creates a 'catch 22' situation for tourism stakeholders, and highlights the need to ensure flow of information about the trends of tourism markets, activities and development within the Region.

The perspectives of tourism-related businesses and NGOs tend to conflict with those held by District Council staff about the District Councils' roles for enabling tourism development. Generally, private sector stakeholders in the West Coast would like to see District Councils take a more active role and increase investment to enable tourism development within the Region. Their main concerns regarding local authorities' enablement of tourism include:

- Lack of information on tourism trends and development.
- The need for a more strategic approach to the enablement of sustainable tourism development.
- The need for increased dialogue between District Councils and the tourism sector.
- The lack of adequate facilities to attract and provide for visitors, particularly signage and public toilets.

Tourism West Coast is also seen to play an important role in enabling tourism development within the Region, namely regional promotion and marketing. The RTO's current functions include rudimentary monitoring of visitor numbers, the coordination of local promotional organisations and the facilitation of industry participation in tourism planning. Overall, the majority of tourism-related businesses and NGOs rated Tourism West Coast's regional promotion as 'good', despite the RTO having to cover a large jurisdictional area with limited resources. Specific concerns regarding the RTOs' role from stakeholders interviewed include the need for:

- Greater consultation with the industry and other groups.
- A development strategy based on better understanding of tourism's trends.

Both tourism stakeholders and RTO management emphasised the need for clear objectives and direction for the sector's development, and improved information about tourism trends, particularly as visitor numbers and tourism activities continue to increase across the Region (Wilson, *pers comm.*, 2000). Tourism West Coast has not developed a strategic plan regarding its objectives for sustainable tourism development within the Region, and currently lacks the expertise and funding to do so.

6.2.2 Management of tourism's impacts: local government functions

While a number of tourism stakeholders across the Region, including businesses, NGOs and Council staff, do not feel that tourism development has increased to the level where it can cause significant adverse impacts, a number of concerns were raised about the management efforts of the relevant local government authorities. In addition, there is a better understanding amongst the majority of business respondents about role of local authorities compared to West Coast Regional Council's role in management of tourism's impacts.

Concerns expressed by tourism-related businesses as well as NGOs regarding tourism's social impacts include:

- Inadequate planning and public consultation for tourism.
- Need to educate locals about tourism's benefits.
- Inadequate signage.
- District Councils' lack of understanding about tourism's benefits and impacts and a lack of support for tourism development.
- The need to educate locals about tourism's benefits.

District Councils play an important role in terms of managing tourism's impacts, through the planning and provision of utilities, regulation of development and monitoring of tourism activities. These roles are mainly governed by the *Local Government Act 1974* and the *Resource Management Act 1991* (RMA). District Councils' efforts are mainly directed toward managing the social impacts of tourism, including impacts relating to the built environment, although local authorities also play an indirect biophysical environmental management function through the provision of waste management and water quality services. Again, District Councils across the West Coast face resource scarcity when attempting to undertake their management functions.

Tourism-related businesses and NGOs also expressed concerns relating to the environmental impacts of tourism within the Region. These include:

- A general lack of environmental awareness on the part of decision-makers.
- *Ad hoc*, reactive management.
- A lack of solid waste and sewage disposal facilities, and the need for strategic planning and increased funding of utilities.
- Increased freedom camper dumping.
- The lack of enforcement of resource consent conditions.

In terms of managing tourism's biophysical impacts, the West Coast Regional Council is the lead agency. However, under the *Local Government Act 1974*, any direct role the West Coast Regional Council might play in tourism planning is restricted to those activities permitted by the District Council within its jurisdiction. Currently, the Regional Council's function of regulating and monitoring tourism's biophysical effects under the RMA allows it to play only an indirect role in sustainable tourism development.

Regional Council's existing role in tourism planning is limited by the District Councils, and there seems to be little impetus amongst Council staff for this to change. Members of the public have also stated they do not want the Regional Council to be involved in the tourism sector. Currently, the majority of tourism-related businesses are unaware of the WCRC's environmental management role in tourism planning within the Region, and these responsibilities are seen to lie mainly with the Department of Conservation. The combination of these factors has resulted in an ambiguous and somewhat limited role for the Regional Council in tourism planning, and there is arguably potential for the Regional Council to become more involved in promoting sustainable tourism development within the Region, particularly in terms of its integrated environmental management function.

Under the RMA, both the West Coast Regional Council and the District Councils administer the resource consent process as part of their functions for managing tourism's social and

environmental impacts. Tourism-related business respondents perceive the resource consent process as time consuming, relatively costly and restrictive of development potential. Concerns were expressed about the lack of consistency in the way decisions to allow developments were made under the Act, and the liberal provisions for public participation it allows. However, despite these concerns, a significant percentage of business respondents recognised that the Act has generally raised the standard of development within the Region. This is consistent with overall findings in New Zealand that the RMA has not come into significant conflict with tourism development (Kearsley, 1997), and that the Act is generally accepted as the appropriate legislative vehicle for managing tourism's effects (TSG, 2001) (www.otsp.govt.nz).

6.3 Rationale for a Sustainable Tourism Strategy

Currently, different groups of tourism stakeholders on the West Coast, namely businesses, NGOs and local government staff, hold differing perceptions about the roles and responsibilities District Councils, the West Coast Regional Council and Tourism West Coast have in promoting sustainable tourism development. The shape of local government's future roles, functions and objectives is currently ambiguous and lacks clear definition. A significant proportion of tourism-related stakeholders interviewed expressed the need for a strategy to clarify these responsibilities and outline the sector's future direction in order to advance sustainable tourism development within the West Coast, particularly as visitor flows and tourism activities within the Region continue to grow.

At the regional level, a sustainable tourism strategy is desirable as many of the issues facing the sector's development occur across district boundaries, such as freedom camper waste management. A regional tourism strategy could clarify local government authorities' roles and problems for service provision in terms of resolving regional-level issues. In addition, a regional strategy could clarify functions for other relevant stakeholders, such as the Department of Conservation, local Health Boards and Transit New Zealand, and establish protocols for dealing with multi-stakeholder issues as these arise.

In terms of the relevant functions and activities that occur within both regional and district authorities, a number of the more specific or site-related issues that were raised during this study can be addressed through the existing annual plan and *Resource Management Act* processes. However, local government functions that affect a broader geographical area and/or number of stakeholders are not currently coordinated under a tourism strategy, particularly the provision of infrastructure, amenities/attractions, promotion and monitoring. This lack of integration of service provision may limit local government's ability to effectively and efficiently plan for and advance sustainable tourism development at the district and regional level, a particular concern for smaller authorities with limited resources that need to be directed and utilised strategically.

Business and NGO respondents have expressed concerns about the lack of consultation over local government's initiatives that affect the sector's development. By not providing a clearer direction for tourism development at both the district and regional level, such as where infrastructure upgrades are required or where environmental carrying capacity is being reached, local government restricts the private sector's ability to assess the potential for tourism development. A sustainable tourism strategy, at both the district and regional level,

would provide local industry with information needed to stimulate further private sector development as well as a forum for dialogue between relevant tourism-related stakeholders. In addition, a strategy could develop a more formal process for stakeholders to communicate with local government authorities, such as over infrastructure and service requirements, which is lacking at present.

6.3.1 The New Zealand Tourism Strategy

The New Zealand Tourism Strategy 2010, released in May 2001, provides a wider context to respond to issues and concerns facing the West Coast. It has also defined a number of guidelines for sustainable tourism development that are relevant to the West Coast situation:

- The need to establish effective partnerships between central and local government and between government and industry.
- Adopting a ‘whole of sector model’ to reduce complexity and improve efficiency in tourism planning and development.
- Monitoring and managing visitor impacts on the natural and social environments.
- Ongoing investment by operators in product development, technology, quality systems and marketing in parallel with securing long-term funding support from local government reflecting the public good nature of much of the marketing, research and development, infrastructure provision, policy and environment conservation effort.
- The need to clarify linkages between destination marketing and destination management.
- Enabling RTOs to take on an enhanced role in destination marketing and management, domestic and regional tourism planning and development.
- Increasing stakeholder understanding and support for tourism (Tourism Strategy Group 2001, ii-viii).

In terms of sustainable tourism development at the regional level, the New Zealand Tourism Strategy 2010 has highlighted the need for increased integration between local authorities’ management of infrastructure and services with the marketing functions undertaken by RTOs. In addition, the integrated environmental management functions of Regional Councils are an important function for avoiding and mitigating the sector’s adverse environmental effects. The Strategy also highlights the need for local government functions to be coordinated with central government, industry, tangata whenua and local communities.

6.4 Recommendations for local government authorities on the West Coast

There is an urgent need for strategic tourism planning on the West Coast, and the TLAs should assume a lead role in this exercise. Broad-based community participation (including Maori, locals and the business sector) is recommended as a cornerstone of any such process. Territorial local authorities plans also need to reach upwards and outwards to achieve strong regional integration and inform the national tourism strategy. Accordingly, the six specific recommendations of this report are as follows:

- The two regional authorities (the West Coast Regional Council and Tourism West Coast) and the West Coast District Councils need to respond to the specific concerns that have been articulated by the business and NGO respondents who took part in this study.

- Rather than responding on an *ad hoc* reactive basis, the above issues should be addressed within a strategic and integrated planning context, both within individual district councils and on an inter-organisational basis at the regional level.
- The West Coast District Councils, the West Coast Regional Council, the Department of Conservation, Tourism West Coast, businesses and NGOs within the tourism industry, tangata whenua and other community groups need to work collaboratively to develop a regional sustainable tourism strategy for the West Coast and to build more effective partnerships between central and local government and between government and industry. The District Councils and Tourism West Coast should assume the lead roles in this exercise.
- A regional strategy for sustainable tourism development needs to clarify the service provision roles and funding commitments for local and central government authorities, Tourism West Coast, industry, tangata whenua and other stakeholders where relevant.
- A regional strategy for sustainable tourism needs to provide for the linkages between destination marketing and destination management, particularly in terms of monitoring and managing visitor impacts on the social and biophysical environments. Providing for the free flow of sectoral information is a key factor in managing these concerns.
- At the district level, the West Coast territorial authorities have a primary role to play in the process of developing and implementing a strategy for sustainable tourism development. A number of the issues and concerns that have been identified within this report need to be addressed within the annual planning cycle under the *Local Government Act 1974* or within district plans processes under the *Resource Management Act 1991*.

In the final analysis, the concerns and issues articulated in this study are not isolated to the West Coast alone, although they are clearly more evident in smaller territorial local authorities with high tourist flows (Parkinson, 1997). Looking to the future, anticipated reforms to the *Local Government Act 1974* are likely to provide a more robust institutional capacity for local government to promote sustainable tourism development on the West Coast. This will be achieved by providing increased flexibility for communities and local government within the Region to identify and respond to specific concerns. This increased flexibility is likely to enable improved strategic planning at the Regional and District level for multi-sectoral activities, such as tourism, and improved integration of regional and local council objectives, roles and functions, in partnership with the Department of Conservation, tangata whenua, business and community groups.

References

- Ateljevic, I., and Doorne, S. (2000). *Local Government and Tourism development: Issues and Constraints of Public Sector Entrepreneurship*. NZ Geographer, 56 (2) pp 25 – 31.
- Birks, S. (1992). 'The public sector: an overview'. In: *The New Zealand Economy: Issues and Practices*. S. Birks and S. Chatterjee (Eds). Palmerston North: Dunmore Press, 264-280.
- Bristow, R. (2000, May 23). 'Ratepayers study tourist tax'. *The Press*. Edition 1:7.
- Bristow, R. (2000, April 13). 'Tourism tax wrong approach ~ Minister'. *The Press*. Edition 1:4.
- Brookers Resource Management Library. (Nov 2000). Database. www.brookers.co.nz.
- Brooks, J. (1997, February 1). 'Hokitika Revisited' *The Press*. Supp.:1-2
- Butcher, G.V., Fairweather, J.R., and Simmons, D.G. (2001). *The Economic Impact of Tourism on Westland District*. TRREC Report Number 26. Lincoln University.
- Deadman, R.E. (1991). *Queenstown residents' acceptability for tourism*. Unpublished dissertation for the Diploma of Tourism. Dunedin: Centre of Tourism, University of Otago.
- Dymond, S. (1996). *Application of the World Tourism Organisation's (1995) indicators of sustainable tourism within the local authority boundaries of New Zealand*. Unpublished Diploma of Tourism dissertation. Dunedin: Centre of Tourism, University of Otago.
- Dryzek, J. (1990). *Discursive democracy: politics, policy, and political science*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Duncan, I. (1995). *Tourism development: The role of local government*. Wellington: New Zealand Institute of Economic Research.
- Durie, M. (1998). *Te Mana, te Kawanatanga: the politics of Māori self-determination*. Auckland: Oxford University Press.
- Espiner, C. (2000, June 24). 'Kaikoura's taxing question'. *The Press*. Edition 2:1.
- Espiner, C. (2001, April 17). 'Coping strategy in the tourism pipeline'. *The Press*:19.
- Elliot, J. (1997). *Tourism: Politics and Public Sector Management*. London: Routledge.
- Fry, D. (1993). *Event Tourism*. Report from Wellington Capital Development Agency to the Local Government Forum on Tourism, 13-14 May 1993. Wellington: Local Government Association (Inc).
- Getz, D. (1987). Tourism Planning and Research: traditions, models and futures. In: *Strategic planning for tourism, proceedings of an Australian Travel Research Workshop*. Bunbury, Western Australia Nov 5-6. (pp2-43).
- Gunn, C. A. (1994). *Tourism Planning* (2nd ed.). New York: Taylor and Francis.

- Hall, C. M., Jenkins, J., and Kearsley, G., (Eds.). (1997). *Tourism Planning and Policy in Australia and New Zealand: Cases, Issues and Practice*. Sydney: Irwin Publishers
- Harrison, A. (1998). *Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) Participation In New Zealand's Biodiversity Strategy: Towards An Integrated Approach To Restoring The Dawn Chorus*. Unpublished Master's Thesis. Lincoln University: Resource Management Group, Environmental Management And Design Division.
- Harland, J (1993) 'Current and Potential Roles of Local Government in Tourism Development'. *Local Government Forum on Tourism: Proceedings*. Wellington 13-14 May 1993. Wellington: Local Government Association (Inc).
- Hughes, (1993). *Developing the Natural Resource Base*. Report from Rotorua District Council to the Local Government Forum on Tourism, 13-14 May 1993. Wellington: Local Government Association (Inc).
- Inskeep, E. (1991). *Tourism Planning: An Integrated and Sustainable Development Approach*. New York, Van Nostrand Reinhold.
- Kean, I. (1993). *Panel Discussion: Roles, Expectations and Challenges to Local Government*. Report from New Zealand Tourism Board to the Local Government Forum on Tourism, 13-14 May 1993. Wellington: Local Government Association (Inc)
- Kearsley, G. (1997). Tourism Planning and Policy in New Zealand. In: *Tourism Planning and Policy in Australia and New Zealand: Cases, Issues and Practice*. C. Michael Hall, John Jenkins and Geoff Kearsley (eds). Sydney: Irwin Publishers
- Lim, E. (1991a). *Regional Analysis of tourism: The economic impact of tourism in New Zealand, Auckland, Bay of Plenty, and Canterbury regions*. Auckland: Deloitte Ross Tohmatsu.
- Lim, E. (1991b). *New Zealand Tourism and the Economy*. Wellington: New Zealand Tourism Department.
- Memon, A. P. (June 2000 – November 2000). *Introductory Planning Lectures*, Department of Environmental Management and Design. Canterbury: Lincoln University
- Ministry of Health. (2000). *National Health Report Nov/Dec 2000*. Website. www.moh.govt.nz
- Moran, D., Sleeman, R., and Simmons, D.G. (2001) *West Coast Visitor Report*. Tourism Recreation Research and Education Centre (TRREC), Lincoln University, Report No. 20.
- Narayan, V. (1998). *Socio-Economic Profile Based on 1996 Census Data: The West Coast Region*. Greymouth, New Zealand: West Coast Regional Council.
- Nelson, J. G, Butler, R., G. Wall, ...et al., (1993). *Tourism and Sustainable Development: Monitoring, Planning, Managing*. (eds) J. G. Nelson, R. Butler, G. Wall. University of Waterloo: Dept. of Geography Publication Series Number 37, Heritage Resources Centre Joint Publication Number 1.

- New Zealand Tourism Board. (1995). *New Zealand Tourism in the 90s*. Wellington: New Zealand Tourism Board.
- O'Fallon, C. (1993). Government involvement in New Zealand tourism: A public choice perspective. *Geojournal*, 29: 271-280.
- Parkinson, J. E. (1997). *New Zealand Territorial Local Authorities: Tourism Planning and Development Roles*. Unpublished dissertation for the Degree of Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management (Hons). Canterbury: Lincoln University.
- Perkins, H. C., and Booth, K. L. (2000). Urban and Community Recreation Planning. In *Environmental Planning and Management in New Zealand* (eds.). P. Ali Memon and Harvey Perkins. Palmerston North, NZ: Dunmore Press
- Simmons, D.G. (1988). *The Socio-Cultural Impacts of Tourism – literature review, policy and research implications*. New Zealand Tourist & Publicity Department SRS 1988/1, Wellington (July).
- Simmons, D., and Leiper, N. (1993). Tourism: A Social Science Perspective. In: *Leisure, recreation and tourism*. Harvey C. Perkins and Grant Cushman (eds). Auckland: Longman Paul.
- Simpson, K. (2000). *Strategic Planning for Regional Tourism In New Zealand*. Conference paper given at the Fourth NZ Tourism and Hospitality Research Conference, Auckland: Dec 2000
- Sowman, R. (1993a). *Panel Discussion: Roles, Expectations and Challenges to Local Government*. Report from Ministry of Tourism to the Local Government Forum on Tourism, 13-14 May 1993. Wellington: Local Government Association (Inc).
- Sowman, R. (1993b). *Tourism and local government*. Issues paper no. 3. Wellington, New Zealand: Ministry of Tourism
- Stafford, A. (1993). *Changing Tourism Trends and their Implications for Local Government*. Report from the New Zealand Tourism Board to the Local Government Forum on Tourism, 13-14 May 1993. Wellington: Local Government Association (Inc).
- Staniford, T. (1993). *Panel Discussion: Roles, Expectations and Challenges to Local Government*. Report from New Zealand Tourist Industry Federation to the Local Government Forum on Tourism, 13-14 May 1993. Wellington: Local Government Association (Inc).
- Statistics New Zealand. (November 1999). *New Zealand – A Regional Profile: West Coast*. Wellington: Statistics New Zealand/Te Tari Tatou.
- Taylor, P. (1997, February 11). 'Tourists miss Coast signs'. *The Press*. Edition 1:4.
- Taylor, R. (1997). *The State of New Zealand's Environment 1997*. Wellington: Ministry for the Environment.
- The Press. (2001, January 5). Pub goes user-pays to spend a penny. *The Press* Edition 2:6.

- Thorn, K. (1994). A proactive approach to tourism planning. *Planning Quarterly*. 115: 7-11.
- Tourism West Coast. (2000a). *Description of RTO and Mission Statement*. Unpublished.
- Tourism West Coast. (2000b). *Regional Product Manual 2000*. Greymouth: Tourism West Coast.
- Tourism Strategy Group. (2001). *New Zealand Tourism Strategy 2010*. Wellington, New Zealand: Tourism Strategy Group. See also www.otsp.govt.nz/tourism%20strategy.pdf.
- Watt, L. (1994). 'Give 'em a taste of Kiwi: Tourism's new developments'. *Management*. 41: 60-65.
- Yska, R. (Ed.) (1997). *Management of the Environmental Effects Associated with the Tourism Sector*. Office of the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment: Wellington, New Zealand.

WEST COAST DISTRICT AND REGIONAL COUNCIL MANAGEMENT PLANS AND POLICIES

- Buller District Council, (2000). *Buller District Plan*. Westport, New Zealand.
- Buller District Council, (2000). *Annual Plan 2000/2001*. Westport, New Zealand.
- Grey District Council, (1999). *Proposed Grey District Plan: natureally amazing: the Grey District*. Greymouth, New Zealand.
- Grey District Council, (2000). *Annual Plan 2000/2001*. Greymouth, New Zealand.
- Westland District Council, (2000). *Annual Plan: Year ending 30 June 2001*
- Westland District Council, (1999). *Annual Report*. Hokitika, New Zealand.
- Westland District Council, (1998). *Proposed District Plan*. Hokitika, New Zealand
- West Coast Regional Council, (1996). *Proposed Regional Policy Statement*. Greymouth, New Zealand.
- West Coast Regional Council, (1996). *Annual Report*. Greymouth, New Zealand.
- West Coast Regional Council, (2000). *Annual Plan for the year to 30 June 2001*.

PERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS

Armstrong, Ray. Ex-chair, *Inangahua Promotions Association*. Reefton, Buller District, Dec 2000.

Comber, Reg. Community Relations Manager, *Department of Conservation*. Westland Conservancy. Hokitika, Westland District, Dec 2000.

Davies, Tim. Professor of Natural Resources Engineering, Lincoln University, June 2001.

Elliot, Chris. Economic Development Officer, *Westland District Council*. Hokitika, Westland District, Dec 2000.

Hoggard, Matt. Planning Officer, *Buller District Council*. Westport, Buller District, Dec 2000.

Kennedy, Martin. Planning Manager, *Grey District Council*. Greymouth, Grey District, Dec 2000.

McManus, Pat. Deputy Chair, *Buller Promotions Association*. Westport, Buller District, Dec 2000.

Narayan, Vijay. Planning Officer, West Coast Regional Council. Greymouth, Grey District, Nov 2000.

Roper, Sue. Chairperson. *GROW Tourism*. Greymouth, Grey District, Dec 2000.

Simpson, Richard. Planning Manager. *Westland District Council*. Hokitika, Westland District, Dec 2000.

Sinclair, Hamish. Planner, *Beca Consulting, Greymouth Office*. Christchurch, March 2001.

Vroon, Davene. Economic Development Officer, *Buller District Council*. Westport, Buller District, Dec 2000.

Wyber, Lynne. Member of Westland's Working (Westland DC – Community Economic Development Working Group) and Clacier Country (South Westland Area Promotions Association) – Franz Josef, Westland District, December 2000.

Westland's Working. *Description and Mission Statement*. Retrieved from website July 2001
www.westlanddc.govt.nz/economic.htm##intro

Wilson, Carolyn. Chief Executive, *Tourism West Coast*. Greymouth, Grey District, Dec 2000.

Wooldridge, Jo. General Manager, Buller Community Development Company Ltd. Westport, Dec 2000.

Appendix 1

The Resource Management Act and District Plans

The tourism industry depends on the sustainable management of New Zealand's environment as a draw card for visitors. In New Zealand, the RMA is the main legislative tool used by local government to sustain environmental quality, as the RMA's purpose is to ensure the sustainable management of New Zealand's natural and physical resources. Sustainable management is defined as:

Managing the use, development, and protection of natural and physical resources in a way, or at a rate, which enables people and communities to provide for their social, economic, and cultural wellbeing and for their health and safety while:

- (a) Sustaining the potential of natural and physical resources (excluding minerals) to meet the reasonably foreseeable needs of future generations.*
- (b) Safeguarding the life-supporting capacity of air, water, soil, and ecosystems.*
- (c) Avoiding, remedying, or mitigating any adverse effects of activities on the environment.*

RMA, Part II, s5(2)

As an amalgam of over 50 older pieces of legislation, the RMA covers a broad range of development activities including land-use planning, water and soil management, pollution (land, water, air and noise), waste disposal, coastal management, land subdivision, heritage protection and the use of geothermal energy. The Act is designed to provide a comprehensive, consistent and integrated process for allocating and managing resources (Hall, Jenkins & Kearsley, 1997:56-7).

The RMA's most significant impact on planning methods lies in its move away from prescriptive control for the allocation of land and resources under traditional land-use planning. Its environmental effects determine whether a certain use of land is deemed appropriate by local authorities, rather than the nature of the activity itself (Hall, Jenkins & Kearsley, 1997:57). This is called effects-based land management and in practical terms, seems to have had little effect on land management.

The RMA sets out a hierarchy of different resource management responsibilities and powers for central and local government. Under the RMA, *central government* mainly provides a national overview and monitoring role. It may also set technical standards, such as water quality standards, and issue policy statements on matters of national significance (Ministry of Tourism, 1993c:8). All RMA-based policies developed at a regional and district level must not contravene policies set by central government.

Regional Councils play a pivotal role through the overview of regional issues. They also provide the overriding framework for all regional resource management policies and plans within the region. Regional plans control air and water pollution, water and soil conservation. They impose rules that restrict activities, such as the discharge of contaminants

into water that Regional Councils enforce (Ministry of Tourism, 1993c:8). Under the RMA's policy hierarchy, District Plans must not contravene Regional policies and plans.

Territorial local authorities have the foremost responsibility for land-use management at the local level. They control the effects of subdivision and land-use, including noise, traffic, visual impacts, nuisances and other effects. To achieve this, local councils set out rules under District Plans that regulate development activities and their effects on the environment. They also monitor and enforce compliance of these rules. There is no set formula for District Plans, and local authorities have the discretion to create rules to suit local resource management issues (Ministry of Tourism, 1993c:6).